



JUSTIN E. ABBOTT

Stories of
**Indian
Saints**

N.R. GODBOLE

STORIES OF INDIAN SAINTS



**DR. JUSTIN E. ABBOTT
PANDIT N.R. GODBOLE**

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Translation of Mahipati's Marathi

BHAKTAVIJAYA

by

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and

PANDIT NARHAR R. GODBOLE

An Introduction by

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PART II

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword ; <i>By J. F. Edwards</i>	...vii-xxxiv
<i>Chapter</i>	
31. Ramdas of Dakur	... 1
32. Kalyan and Niradhar the Celibate	... 7
33. Surdas The Blind Saint	... 15
34. Sena the Barber	... 22
35. King Satvik and Karmabai	... 29
36. Janajasvant and Surdas Madanmohan	... 38
37. Rasik Murar	... 52
38. Mirabai	... 66
39. Kanhopatra	... 78
40. Damajipant of Mangalvedhe	... 85
41. Mrityunjaya Swami	... 100
42. Bhanudas	... 109
43. Bhanudas (<i>Continued</i>)	... 122
44. The Story of Bahirambhat	... 145
45. Eknath	... 154
46. Eknath and Shri Khandya the Brahmin	... 172
47. Ramdas of Jamb	... 189
48. Tukaram	... 201
49. Tukaram (<i>Continued</i>)	... 218
50. Tukaram („)	... 235
51. Tukaram and Nimbaraj	... 252
52. Tukaram and Dev of Chinchvad	... 279
53. Mankoji Bodhla The <i>Patil</i> of Dhamangaon	... 295
54. Mankoji Bodhla and Hansi the Handmaid	... 313
55. Ganeshnath, Keshav Swami, Gomal, and Latibsha	... 331
56. Santoba Pawar; Niloba; Uddhava Chidghan	... 348

	Page
57. Visoba Saraf ...	367
57. (Continued) Summary of the <i>Bhaktavijaya</i> ...	376
Appendix I. Notes on Pauranic Names in the <i>Bhaktavijaya</i> ...	389
„ II. Pauranic Narratives Referred to in the <i>Bhaktavijaya</i> ...	422
„ III. Words With Numerical Signifi- cance Used in the <i>Bhaktavijaya</i> ...	434
„ IV. Epithets of Vishnu Found in the <i>Bhaktavijaya</i> ...	450
„ V. Poetic Fancies Used in the <i>Bhaktavijaya</i> ...	456
Index ...	457

FOREWORD

BY

J. F. Edwards

The Late Pundit N. R. Godbole

This is the tenth volume in the 'Poet Saints of Maharashtra' series begun by the late Dr. Justin Edwards Abbott in 1926. Since the publication of the ninth volume last December the cause of Marathi literature has suffered a serious blow by the death from pneumonia on Friday morning, February 16, after a brief illness, of Pundit Narhar Ramchandra Godbole. This able and unassuming Marathi scholar had collaborated in the preparation of this series of English translations, first with the late Dr. Abbott through Dr. Nicol Macnicol and latterly with the present editor of the series. On September 1933 the Pundit whose passing has left such a sad gap in the ranks of Western India entered on his sixtieth year. We can never forget the occasion of our last visit with him. Little did we dream it was to be our last, and the mellowing light of that closing fellowship seems to throw itself back over the years that preceded. We had called to see him on the Tuesday evening previous to the end and found him doubled up with asthmatic pain. Instead of discussing with him the various points we had taken for his customary elucidation, we found ourselves commending him in prayer to our common Father-God. For though this learned Brahman held a different faith from ours, there was in him a deep strain of devotion which manifested itself at all times and never so impressively as in this hour of need. Pundit Narhar Ramchandra Godbole was one of the humblest and most patient of scholars, to work with whom one came to regard as a high privilege.

That the fellowship was also prized by the departed Pundit appears from a sacred document which we shall treasure, a document he had handed over to us for the purpose of a Preface, but from which to quote here would be scarcely fitting because of its over-generous terminology and characteristic oriental charity in relation to ourselves. In the same document Pundit Godbole expressed great surprise at Dr. Abbott's desire that he (the Pundit) 'should be recognized on the title-page as joint-author of this and the preceding volume, the Pundit adding characteristically: 'Among us Hindus there is a saying that if a great man coats a stone with red paint it is deified and then worshipped by the public; that saying is now verified in my own case, for my master has put on me the coat of editorship.' We are happy to be able to add that although the good Pundit who worked for several years on this series of translations of the Poet Saints has not seen the completion of the task, he has left enough of solid preparation in manuscript form to ensure that his capable hand will be seen in the volumes still remaining.

Corrections

In our Foreword to the earlier volume on the *Bhaktavijaya* dated December 7, 1933, we find we were in error in stating that the late Dr. Justin E. Abbott was 'born at Rahuri.' We are indebted for this correction to Dr Abbott's brother in America who kindly acknowledges a copy of the volume by writing us on February 2, 1934 as follows:—'My brother was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, United States, and went out to India with our parents in 1857 when Justin was four years old, and father was assigned to Rahuri.' We are deeply grateful for this correction, and we request all those readers who may detect errors of date, of translation, of opinion, etc. kindly to communicate the same to us.

Usefulness of Dr. Abbott's Benefactions

The Annual Report of the Deccan Sabha presented to the annual meeting on February 26 this year refers to the completion of Gokhale Hall, Poona, toward which Dr. Abbott bequeathed 5,000 dollars, following a previous donation of Rs. 15,000 in 1930. The Report speaks of the need for a special library in the Gokhale Hall, and then adds :

' We never intended to rest content merely with the construction of these buildings. Our aim has always been that this memorial to one who was never tired of emphasising the importance of a careful study of public questions on the part of public workers should provide facilities for such study by means of a suitable library specialising in politics and economics—the two subjects in which the great patriot was deeply interested. The provision of a well equipped library of this character will involve expenditure on scale which is out of the question, at any rate for some time to come, owing to the economic depression. But a decent beginning in that direction can be made with the amount due to us for this purpose under the will of the late Dr. Justin E. Abbott. He left to the Deccan Sabha a bequest of five thousand dollars earmarked for the purchase of books. It is difficult at the moment to say precisely how much money will accrue to us but during the year we have received about Rs. 6,500 from his executors which apparently represent a substantial portion of the amount that may ultimately fall to our share.'

Expressions of profound gratitude are also placed on record in the annual Marathi Report of the *Bharata Itihasa Sanshodhaka Mandala* whose headquarters are at 314 Sadashiv Peth, Poona, to which Dr. Abbott bequeathed thirty thousand dollars ' for a building or an addition to a building to house properly Marathi manuscripts and other historic documents.' After quoting the words of the Abbott bequest, the Report of this Society for Indian Historical Research expresses in terminology of deepest religious devotion the Society's grateful appreciation of the noble-minded donor and of the inspiration from above that led to such a gift.

With reference to Dr. Abbott's munificent benefactions, our late Pundit Mr. Godbole wrote : 'Dr. Abbott's last will

and testament fell into the hands of his legatees in India on Friday, 12th August, 1932. His munificence supplied food for thought to the English and vernacular journalistic world of India and especially that of Maharashtra. The whole atmosphere was as it were ringing with the fame of his bounty.' We would like to take this opportunity of gratefully acknowledging the many tributes paid by the Indian press to the large-hearted generosity of this former editor and missionary among the people of Maharashtra whom he came to love so deeply.

The Best Edition of Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya*

In the preparation of these two volumes containing the English translation of Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya*, the three workers (the late Dr Abbott, the late Pundit and ourselves) are indebted to one particular publication above all others, and that is the edition of this great Marathi classic entitled अभिनव भक्तविजय (*Abhinava Bhaktavijaya*). Other editions are in the *pothi* form inconvenient for holding, and while they are attractive because the chief scene in each chapter is given as a sample of Indian art, yet the ordinary book form adopted in this later edition makes the reading of the Marathi original a real pleasure, no minor consideration when the original extends to forty thousand lines of Marathi poetry. Published in June 1930, its editor's name is given as दिनदास (Dindās); its publishers the Paramartha Sāadhanālaya Sansthā at Shivday, P. O. Phonda Ghat, Savantavadi State, Ratnagiri District; its printer D. A. Savant at the Shri Ram Tattva Printing Press, Belgaum; its price only Rs. 4-8. At the the foot of each page there appear useful explanatory notes on difficult words in the text (of course in Marathi), and each chapter in this excellent seven hundred-page Marathi work has a brief sketch of the teaching at the beginning and a brief summary of contents, with questions arising, at the close. The Marathi text alone takes up 651

pages and at the end of the book are two valuable appendices; one consisting of Notes based on the chief Pauranic Names mentioned in the *Bhaktavijaya*, the other consisting of instructive sections amplifying the Pauranic Narratives in the text. Both these were translated by Pundit Godbole and they appear in the present volume as the first two of the five invaluable appendices he prepared, our own additions being indicated by our initials (*J. F. E.*) at the end of the few paragraphs we have added. Those who desire to compare the Marathi original text with the English translation in these two volumes should without fail obtain this Marathi edition of Mahipati, the details given above being adequate guidance how to obtain the volume from any bookseller. In the introduction to the *Abhinava Bhaktavijaya* the following approximately complete list of Mahipati's published works is given :—

Name of book	Chapters	No. of verses	Year of Composition	
			'Shake' Era	A. D. Era
1. <i>Bhaktavijaya</i>	57	9916	1684	1762
2. <i>Sant Lilamrita</i>	35	5259	1689	1767
3. <i>Bhaktalilamrita</i>	51	10,794	1696	1774
4. <i>Santavijaya</i>	26 (incomplete)	4628	1696	1774
5. <i>Kathāsaramrita</i>	36	7200	1687	1765
6. <i>Pandhari Mahatmya</i>	12			
7. <i>Anantavrataskatha</i>		186		
8. <i>Dattatreya Janma</i>		112		
9. <i>Tulsi Mahatmya</i>	5	763		
10. <i>Ganesh Purana</i>	4 (incomplete)	304		
11. <i>Pandurang Stotra</i>		108		
12. <i>Muktabharanavrata</i>		101		
13. <i>Rishipanchamivrata</i>		142		
14. <i>Apradha nivedana stotra</i> (verses on confession of sin)		101		
15. <i>Saransha Dnyaneshwari</i> (abridged <i>Dnyaneshwari</i>)		2431		

LIVES IN VERSE BY MAHIPATI

1.	Life of Shri Nāmdev	62	verses
2.	„ „ Haripal	58	...
3.	„ „ Kamāl	67	...
4.	„ „ Narasinha Mehta	52	...
5.	„ Raka Kumbhar	47	...
6.	„ Jagamitra Nāgā	63	...
7.	„ Mankoji Bodhale	67	...
8.	„ Santoba Pawar	102	...
9.	„ Chokha Mela	47	...
10.	„ Shri Tukaram		

In addition there are many unpublished works of Mahipati.

The Idea of Sin in India

It is worthy of note that one of Mahipati's works in the foregoing list (No. 14) consists of 101 verses of confession of sin. Now although it is outside the purpose and plan of this book to discuss the religious or theological implications of the entrancing stories handed down by Mahipati, yet these stories of Indian saints in Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya*, even in an English translation, make an important contribution towards dispelling from the minds of their readers the error very widely held that the Indian saints evince little or no sense of personal sinfulness. Scores of pages both in this volume and in the preceding volumes of the Poet Saints series supply sufficient answer. On this interesting subject a German scholar of international repute, at a Conference held in Berlin in the closing days of January this year for the purpose of exploring the primitive and pre-historic memorials of the German race, applied the term 'heathen' to a Western race. Said Professor Witte of Berlin: 'We have now a self-conscious German heathenism,' referring in particular to a certain German racial 'conception of a Nordic God, a Viking of the skies.' After pointing out that the idea of sin and of the need of redemption was abhorrent to 'the German pagans,' the learned Dr. Witte went on to emphasize that the Sages

of India have pondered deeply over the problem of sin and evil. His words on this subject are worth quoting :

'They (the Indian sages) have taken it indeed so seriously that they have discovered no remedy except in setting up the doctrine of reincarnation, according to which man is forced to pass through innumerable lives on earth—a fearful prospect ! And these many reincarnations are necessary because it is impossible to wipe out evil. It must be paid for in the tortures of ever-new existence. And in many other ways India has striven, like all other peoples, to devise means for the removal of guilt. By sacrifices, by asceticism, by prayers, by offerings. Yet never was peace attained. It was in India that the idea arose that sin might be atoned for in the cleansing fires of purgatory; but neither there could peace be found. The longing for a Redeemer is found in these Eastern faiths, and with it went the hope of a Divine incarnation.'

Or as the noble-minded Bahinabai says in volume 5 of this series on the Poet Saints (page 99): 'Wherever we ask, we find our doubts are not solved.... No one who really understands the heart tells me. On whose words then shall I rely to give my mind rest ? They tell you very many rules and methods, various forms of worship and various *mantras*. Some prescribe repeating of *mantras* sitting in the five different postures, such being the importance ascribed to how one sits. Others tell you of sacred waters, of austerities and rites. Others again tell you an infinite number of ceremonials in worship. Says Bahinabai, " My mind is not at rest. The battlefield of ignorance I see everywhere." ' On the other hand, according to Dr. Witte, German secularism is adopting a new guise in the ' pantheistic mysticism ' of European ' neo-pagans,' for ' it is the self-worshipping man who revolts against God and refuses to hear the truth.'

' The Empire of the Spirit ' in India's Religious Quest

Enough has been said in the foregoing to establish the truthfulness of the observation made recently by a western writer who said we need to remember in all our

religious study of the Orient that the religious history of a country 'does not commence with the moment of a missionary's arrival in it, nor are the movements of the Spirit of God most faithfully delineated by the recital of all that has happened to him and his wife.' That the Divine Spirit Himself is at work in man's agelong quest after God is a conclusion long since accepted by all reverent scholars, and the forty thousand Marathi lines in Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya* are themselves sufficient to establish the conclusion set forth recently by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, India's most popular philosopher, that beneath the bewildering variety in Hinduism there is 'a common quest' (*The Hindu View of Life*, p. 58). Though it is true that a few years ago a symposium on 'What Makes a Man a Hindu' yielded sixty different definitions out of which only three agreed and these only in saying that a Hindu was one who was born such and who had not renounced the Hindu faith; and though the term 'Hindu' is so comprehensive that a man may be a pantheist, a polytheist, a theist, even a monotheist and yet be a Hindu, the term 'Hindu' so defying definition or a complete analysis, and the Hindu creed being so intangible; though, as we say, these things are true, it is also true to say with Radhakrishnan that 'the Hindu spirit is that attitude towards life which regards the endless variety of the visible and temporal world as sustained and supported by the invisible and external spirit' (*Ibid* 124). And though the facts of Hinduism compel the acceptance of another verdict of Radhakrishnan's, viz., that in orthodox Hinduism as set forth in the Upanishads 'the pursuit of truth is more negative than positive, more an escape to incomplete conceptions than the attainment of perfect truth' (*The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, pp. 413-414), yet a just verdict shows also that it is equally true that in the loftier reaches of

the *Bhakti* Hinduism which we see in the 57 chapters of Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya* we are introduced to what Professor Muirhead has finely described in a recent issue of *The Hibbert Journal* (October 1932) as 'the empire of the spirit.' And it is because Mahipati provides such an entrancing introduction to that 'empire of the spirit' that he has a real message today to so many in both East and West who are like so much drifting sand in the arid desert of agnosticism and materialism. For the same reason we can say that Mahipati has built a golden bridge of understanding contact between those who live in India and those who live in other lands.

India's 'Incorrigible Religiousness'

Granted that there is much in great Indian religious classics like Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya* which we find difficult to square with the needs of religious life in these strenuous modern times, nevertheless there remains much ground for Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's observation that 'India's chief fault is that she is incorrigibly religious.' How religious, India really is, may be dimly realized when we think of her two millions of so-called 'holy men' some of whom Mahipati has sympathetically pilloried in his pages; yet men who, notwithstanding their perversion of true religion as seen in these 'stories,' were all the time sincerely dedicated to the ideal of poverty and self-denial. Think of the hundreds of thousands of *sannyasis* living in solitary places that they may be 'alone with God' in the astonishing fashion Mahipati has described. Think of the religious festivals he paints so vividly, still held all over India, one of them attended according to one estimate by no less than three million people, many of whom tramp hundreds of miles on foot, some of them two thousand miles and more, with the sole object (as Mahipati shows) of having their sins washed away. And yet some

people doubt the existence of a sense of sin in India !! Sir Leonard Rogers once ascertained by careful investigation that the average number of Indians who go on pilgrimage each year cannot be less than twenty millions: half the population of England ! Surely no one can read such a work as the *Bhaktavijaya* without feeling that in its religious devotion India, holds the pre-eminence, though so much of it is so sadly misdirected and perverted. And though India is changing at a rapid rate, with thousands of her noblest sons and daughters going over to secularism, who will dare to say that in an India of such unfathomable religious emotion and such astonishing powers of renunciation, if only her religious ideas can become purified and worthily dedicated—who will dare to say that, in a renovated India, secularism and agnosticism may not encounter their Himalayan barrier ? Such a situation would but fulfil the anticipation of those who have held that in the order of Providence India is destined to provide the arena for the final Armageddon of religion.

Religion the Backbone of India

Ideas akin to these were finely expanded in a speech given by Swami Vivekananda some years ago in reply to an address presented to him by the Hindus of Kumbhakonam, the theme being that religion is the backbone of Hindu society. Said the Swami :

' For good or for evil, the religious ideal has been flowing into India for thousands of years; for good or evil the Indian atmosphere has been filled with ideals of religion for shining scores of centuries; for good or evil we have been born and brought up in the very midst of these ideals of religion, till it has entered into our very blood, and tingles with every drop of it in our veins and has become one with our constitution, become the very vitality of our lives. Can you give such religion up without the rousing of the same energy in reaction, without filling the channel which that mighty river has cut out for itself in the course of thousands of years ? Do you want that the Ganges should go back to its icy bed and begin a new course ? Even

if *that* were possible, it would be impossible for this country to give up her characteristic course of religious life and take up a new career of politics or something else for herself. You can only work under the law of least resistance, and this religious line is the line of least resistance in India. This is the line of life, this is the line of growth, and this is the line of well-being in India, to follow the track of religion.'

The Maratha Epic Fight For Religious Liberty

There is a great deal in Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya* to show that the Marathi saints of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries regarded themselves as Providentially designated to preserve for their fellow-countrymen the worthiest ideals of Hindu *bhakti*. This is one of the chief themes in that brilliant historical fragment by Mahadev Govind Ranade, *The Rise Of The Maratha Power*. It is also a recurring theme in many of the poems of those saints of whom Mahipati has handed down to posterity such a living picture. One example will suffice here, where Ramdas sets forth the plight of *Dharma* under Muslim domination in the 17th century. Ramdas exclaims: * ' *Tirthas* (i. e., places of holy waters) and *Kshetras* (i. e., holy places) have been destroyed, sacred places of *Brahmans* have been defiled; the whole world has grown sick (of these things) and *Dharma* has disappeared....

* These 14 lines of an English translation and the version of the original 8 lines of Marathi are both taken from *The Mahratta* of May 22, 1927. The Marathi text reads :

तीर्थे क्षेत्रे मोडिलीं । ब्राह्मण-स्थाने भ्रष्ट झालीं ।
 सकल पृथ्वी आदोळली । धर्म गेला ॥
 देव-ब्राह्मण गोब्राह्मण । करावया संरक्षण ।
 हव्यस्थ जाला नारायण । प्रेरणा केली ॥
 उर्वड पंडित पुराणिक । कबीश्वर याज्ञिक वैदिक ।
 धूर्त तार्किक सभानायक । तुमच्या ठायीं ॥
 या भूमंडळाचे ठायीं । धर्म रक्षी देसा नाहीं ।
 महाराष्ट्रधर्म राहिला काहीं । तुम्हाकारणें ॥

God Narayan residing in the heart has inspired you to protect the images of gods, *Dharma*, cows and Brahmans. You are the patron of many *pundits* (men learned in the *Shastras*), *Purāniks* (reciters of *Purānas*), *Kavishwaras* (poets), *Yājñiks* (men versed in sacrificial ceremonial), *Vaidikas* (men who have learned the Vedas by heart), and *Dhurta Tarkika Sabhā Nāyaks* (members of assemblies wise and versed in logic). On this earth there is no one able to protect *Dharma*. It is because of you (Shivaji) that *Dharma* in Maharashtra (or Maharashtra-*Dharma*) is getting protection.' How rich is this word *Dharma* in all the Marathi *bhakti* literature will be clear from the following:—

'In the introductory passage of the *Yadynavalkya Smriti* the meaning of the word *Dharma* is very briefly and lucidly stated and illustrated as follows :—"Here the word *Dharma* is used to denote six kinds of *Smarta Dharmas*, viz., (1) *Varna Dharma* (the duties, prescribed for the people of different *Varnas* or castes; (2) *Ashrama Dharma* (the duties prescribed for people belonging to the four orders, viz., *Brahmacharya* (student), *Grihastha* (householder), *Vanaprastha* (one who has retired to a forest), and a *Sanyasi* (one who has given up the world); (3) *Varnashrama Dharma* (duties prescribed for a man of a particular caste and particular order); (4) *Guna Dharma* (duties relating to one holding a particular status); (5) *Nimitya Dharma* (occasional duties); (6) *Sadharan Dharma* (duties common to all)."

That a Brahman should never drink wine is an instance of *Varna Dharma* (i. e., a duty belonging to a man of a particular *Varna* or caste). That a *Brahmachari* should perform morning and evening *Homa* is *Ashrama Dharma* (duty prescribed for a man belonging to the *Brahmacharya* order). That a Brahman *Brahmachari* should use the staff of a Palasha tree is *Varnashrama Dharma* (duty prescribed for a man of a particular *Varna* or caste and a particular *Ashrama*, i. e., order). That a king who has been crowned and who possesses qualities prescribed by *Shastras* should protect his subjects is *Guna Dharma* (duty prescribed for a man holding a particular status). Undergoing penance with a view to cleanse a man of the blame arising from not doing what the *Shashtra* has prescribed to be done and from doing what the *Shashtra* has prohibited is *Nimitya Dharma* (duty arising by reason of the occa-

sional lapses of duty or breaches of injunctions of the *Shastras*). The duty of not killing (*Ahimsa*), of speaking the truth etc., etc., which duties are to be practised by all men from a Brahman to a Chandala, is *Sadharan Dharma* (duties common to all beings). (From *The Mahratta*, May 22, 1927).

Maratha Pre-eminence in Indian History

To these admirable definitions of what *Dharma* really means, we only need to add that the 850 pages of English translation in these two volumes of *Stories of Indian Saints* provide a veritable gold mine of illustrations taken from actual life. These were the religious ideals to which Ramdas appealed in his famous couplet :

मराठा तितुका मेळवावा । महाराष्ट्रधर्म वाडवावा ॥

येविषयी न करितां तक्रवा । पूर्वज हांसती ॥

This means: 'Unite all the Marathas and spread everywhere Maharashtra *Dharma*. If you do not exert yourself for accomplishing this, your ancestors will look upon you with derision.' The response to that appeal has given us one of the greatest epic stories in Indian history and hence the historian can say that 'the Marathas alone of all the various nationalities of India crushed the growing Moghul power' (see G. S. Sardesai, *Main Currents of Maratha History*), the Marathas being the only *Indian* nation that has ever ruled so great a part of India. The explanation lies in the fact that the people of the time 'looked upon the Maratha leaders as the liberators and defenders of their faith,' and the result of this fight for religious liberty, extending over more than three centuries, gave to the people of Maharashtra the famous epithet of *Jayishnu* or 'conquering' while those of other provinces are described as *shishnu* or 'passively suffering,' to quote the apt distinction made by Mr. Rajwade. When Mahipati was engaged on his *Bhaktavijaya*, the Maratha Power was at the zenith of its influence, but as he wrote his closing chapters the historic Maratha Confederacy was being shattered on the fatal

battlefield of Panipat (1761). In the *Bhaktavijaya* stories we see at work in the daily life of peasant, priest and poet alike those religious ideals which gave to Maharashtra its well-deserved pre-eminence over all the other people of India. Alas ! that so many in Maharashtra have lost the pristine glory of their *bhakti* patriots and poets and have made patriotism itself their sole religion.

When Religion Is Perverted

Mahipati lived in such a different climate from the atheism and agnosticism of modern India that a Foreword to such a book as this is no place to deal adequately with the growing revulsion in India against that corruption of religion which has been responsible for the toleration and perpetuation of those monstrous evils of Indian society such as infanticide, child-marriage, untouchability, etc. These have so long masqueraded under the guise of religion as to alienate thousands of India's educated minds from religion as such. Even the mild and tolerant Mahipati makes one of his heroes in this volume, Ganeshnath the mendicant, tell some high-caste Brahmans who were boasting that they 'belonged to the highest class, (page 336), ' The palm tree is very tall but its shade is of no use to anyone.' And in another place (page 323) Mahipati puts into the mouth even of Krishna the words, ' We must not give the mystic *mantra* to a man of the low caste,' to whom Krishna gives the offensive name of 'Unmentionable,' the whole story that follows showing how a Mahar was disgraced before the people. How terribly a corrupt form of religion can mislead the people has been illustrated for India anew while this Foreword was being written. We refer to the tragic outbreak of violence arising out of the protest by the villagers of Tiruvadi in the Tanjore District of South India against the attempt of the police, acting under definite orders

from Government, to stop the brutalising practice of self-torture in the form of hook-swinging and hook-dragging as acts of propitiation of the local deity ; so fierce was the popular resentment against interference by the law that one official was battered to death inside the temple and two others were murdered outside. Similarly tragic corruptions of religion are also being seen (as we write) in the recurrence of animal sacrifices in widely separated Indian centres, accompanied by terribly cruel methods that have evoked many noble protests, e. g., from the All-Indian Humanitarian League. In such incidents one is equally amazed at the passionate quest after God and at man's perversion of this quest.

Why Indian Religious Literature Is Unattractive

These biographical fragments from Mahipati offer to Western students a new method of studying Indian religion. With the best will in the world to understand Hinduism at its noblest, even the most diligent students in Western lands find India's traditional literature to be forbidding and unattractive in the highest degree. This point has been put so well and so recently by a British writer of high standing that we will quote his words. In the book which has a misleadingly militant title, *Counter Attack From The East*, Mr. C. E. M. Joad, after stating that 'Radhakrishnan is definitely critical of the sterile dogmatism in which Hindu thought has apparently come to rest,' continues :

'The vital flow of religious inspiration has trickled away into the sands of scholarship and formalism, and there apparently it has lost itself. It is, indeed, difficult to read Indian philosophy with its endless commentaries upon the semi-sacred texts of its various systems without deriving the impression that one is being presented with a testimony, one of the most striking, to the perverted ingenuity of the human mind.... The ideas are unacknowledged in the West, the philosophy almost entirely unread. The reason is, I think, the unfamiliar, the perverse form which Indian philosophers have chosen to adopt.... Contemplating this curious *corpus* of

dogma, piety and learning the Western reader is doubly repelled. So far as the past is concerned, he finds the ideas, the undoubtedly valuable ideas, of Indian philosophy clothed in the unfamiliar and forbidding garb of a commentary upon sacred texts; so far as the present is concerned, he is led to suppose that philosophy has reached a dead end.'

The Biographical Method of Studying Indian Religion

This extract, though from one declaring himself 'an avowed agnostic,' illustrates the need of an entirely new method of presentation if Indian religious literature is to capture the imagination of the world. Mahipati's entrancing stories of Indian saints, of which the *Bhaktavijaya* is full from end to end, supply the needed change in method, for they provide us with hundreds of examples of the religious life of the *individual* in Hinduism. We venture to suggest this biographical method is not only more interesting but that it also supplies a more reliable test of the value, or otherwise, of Hinduism in the everyday life of India's people. Systems of thought, age-long institutions and extensive movements we have had in plenty in the study of Hinduism. Mahipati offers us a new method of understanding this vast and all-pervasive influence on India's people. By his biographical method Mahipati presents us with many varying types of those individuals who have prevailed in every period of Hinduism and who never abounded as they do today all over the land, people by the thousand who feel that the philosophical tenets and the priestly systems of orthodox Hinduism are alien from the daily needs of the common people. Craving as they do some other form of religion, they have created in India a type of 'religious outsider' who feel they can no longer accept many things for which the traditional religion stands. Though most people of this type have not definitely broken with the accepted system, and though many of them seldom if ever attend the Hindu temple, yet their number is increas-

ing immensely, especially among the ever growing student population of India. Mahipati's biographical stories offer an almost ideal method of learning how to understand these people, many of whom occupy positions of great influence in Indian society. Since these people to-day are the true religious descendants of many of those whom Mahipati has so skilfully portrayed in the *Bhaktavijaya*, this eighteenth century biographer can help us to establish invaluable points of contact with many of the Indian citizens in our own day.

Religious Value of Mahipati's Biographies

Concerning the question whether Mahipati's characters are drawn from actual life or are examples of eighteenth century Indian religious fiction, we cannot do better than quote what we have found in one of Dr Abbott's manuscripts handed over to us. Says our late friend: 'Whether the stories of the different saints are real or legendary matters little, but from them we learn what was popularly considered their conception of God, and their way of approach to Him. That they considered an image of an *avatar* like Rama or Krishna a way of approach cannot be doubted. Tukaram's enthusiasm before the image at Pandharpur and the devotion of Ramdas to images of Rama give abundant evidence. But it should also be remembered that the approach by way of the idol was not their only way. They practised and taught what is called *manas puja*, that is, worship in their inmost mind. It was their way of going as it were into their inner chamber and of closing the mind's door as they prayed in secret to God, Whom they called Mother and Father. If Hindus of the present day were to follow the ideas of these their own *bhakti* saints, they need never seek approach to God through an idol but could always use the method of *manas puja* (mental worship). Of course

not all the *bhaktas* in these stories held to the *high* ideal of *bhakti* (devotion) and *vairagya* (self-denial) as did Tukaram and Ramdas. Many were sincere *bhaktas* while carrying on their worldly business, but they had the *spirit* of *vairagya*, that is, their indifference to worldly things (their *vairagya*) was one of mind and spirit. It meant that they did not look upon their riches as acquired for their own happiness, but to help the needy. They understood that they should not lay up the temporal riches of this world but should aim at the supreme spiritual riches. Saints like Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas tried to live the life of *complete* indifference to worldly things. But they did not press this highest ideal upon others, unless others themselves so chose it. Others were to continue in the business of life, doing their respective duties, but always with the unselfish spirit of *vairagya*, or of indifference to worldly things. *Bhakti* saints like Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas tried to obey *literally* the precepts, "Give to him who asketh of thee," "Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat or drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." They trusted God for everything.'

'India's Religion Of Grace'

Careful readers of Mahipati's biographical stories of the *bhakti* saints of Maharashtra will note many personal confessions, prayers and records of the most intimate religious experience which illustrate most strikingly the conclusions of that reverent investigator of the Science of Religion at the University of Marburg, Professor Rudolf Otto, who is rightly acknowledged as 'one of the very first theologians of Germany,' and who sees in Indian *bhakti* 'the working of the Spirit of God among all men' as 'an actual preparation' for 'the coming of the day when all the world will be united in one faith and on

communion, which will be the Kingdom of God.' The words are those of Dr Frank Hugh Foster of Oberlin, Ohio, U. S. A., in his 'Translator's Preface' to the English edition of Dr Otto's remarkable book entitled *India's Religion of Grace* published in 1930. The attitude of this book to India's religious aspirations is indicated by the one and only reference to Marathi religious literature where Dr Otto speaks (p. 63) of 'the wonderful, delicate and spiritual songs of the Mahārāshtra saints.' To show what Dr Otto means by his conception of *India's Religion Of Grace* it is impossible to give more than the following selections from his rich 141 pages:—

'Indian thinkers have not engaged in speculation for the sake of mere metaphysics or to gain a theoretical view of the universe, but the purpose has been to give a doctrine of salvation, that is to set forth the "Way" to a good above the world and infinite, which is at the same time fundamentally different from all mere happiness and cannot be estimated in worldly values, not even in "moral" values, but has a purely religious value. Involvement in the boundless misery of "being lost;" longing for "redemption" from the chains of such misery, a misery arising directly from the mere fact that man and the world are what they are; the way through redemption to an eternal, imperishable good which cannot be compared with anything of earth, or either found or appropriated by one's own reason or power, but is an "altogether different" good; these are in India as well as with us the impelling interests, awakened by the text and the meaning of the *Sruti*, the Holy Scriptures of the old Upanishads. And, consequently, the Indian systems of doctrine, too, are not properly "philosophy," but doctrine founded upon "faith," not interesting metaphysics, but theology' (Otto p. 13). 'The religion of India is, in its last and highest form, the religion of acosmistic mysticism, a mysticism denying the reality of world, things, personality' (p. 16).

India's Battle Against Pantheism

Dr Otto proceeds to show that in contrast with 'a particular form of the Vedānta,' 'in India itself there has been waged the hottest battle against this "monistic" mys-

ticism of an impersonal Absolute, and there has arisen there, moved by original impulses and drawn from original sources, that which I call its "religion of grace" (p. 17).

'Beginning in the profound verses of the pre-Christian *Bhagavad-gita*, the book most loved and honoured by millions of Hindus, passing through times of obscurity and reformation, as with us, this doctrine of grace rises till it gains at last positions which dumbfound us Protestants by their analogy to our fundamental ideas....*Bhakti*-religion and the strange perplexities of its "doctrine of grace" have in the East not only seized upon Hinduism, but have also penetrated and shaped certain peculiar forms of doctrine and communions in Buddhism' (p. 18). 'In this Indian *bhakti*-religion there is presented, without doubt, a real, saving God, believed, received, and—can we doubt it?—experienced' (p. 21). 'Great and wide circles of the pious people of India recognize with glowing enthusiasm the way of *bhakti* as the *only* way, and reject that of Shankara as damnable heresy and soul-destructive error' (p. 22).

India's Struggle For God

In a spirit which combines appreciation with discrimination the Marburg theologian goes on to say :

'Long before the *bhakti*-religion had assumed a settled form, men had sought in India for God, had questioned, struggled and known about Him, and not merely about a God of metaphysical speculation, but a real and living God' (p. 25). 'It was a struggle for God, a real God, not such a God as philosophical speculation gives us, but such as the heart and the soul need and seek, a God to inspire personal trust, love, reverence and loyal self-surrender' (p. 29). 'Here we are dealing with a *genuine religion* and *religion of experience*. Religion is here no mere fringe of sentiment furnishing a border to the rest of our life, but is conceived as the true meaning of life itself. With this is connected a trait which is characteristic of the later theology of this religious communion; the properly speculative questions recede more and more, and the direct questions of practical religion come forward, questions regarding salvation, what is connected with it and how it is attained' (p. 44).

This is not the place to follow Dr Otto in the remainder of his fascinating study as he contrasts the spirit of Indian *bhakti* as seen in the *Gita* and in the *bhakti* poets with the

bhakti of the Bible, and as he sets forth 'the incomparably more piercing and vigorous spirit of Palestine,' witnessed in a quickened conscience for sin through communion with the *Holy* God and in the heart's cry for, and heart's assurance of, forgiveness. Enough has been said, we would hope, to lead non-Indian readers in East and West to search in the gold mine of Mahipati's biographical narratives of the religious history of Maharashtra for numerous illustrations of the correctness of Dr Otto's position concerning both the excellencies and shortcomings of Indian *bhakti*. How grave some of those shortcomings are have been noted already by readers of the previous volume, e. g., such moving stories as that of Gora the Potter (see chapter xvii, verses 99-127) whose *bhakti* led him to 'become so utterly absorbed as to be identified with the Invisible' and to trample his own child to death as he danced in his 'ecstatic mood' in 'worship of Hari.' On the principle of avoiding 'that irritating method, as unscientific as it is ungenerous, which selects the worst in one religion and contrasts it with the best in another,' we have allowed Dr Otto to speak for himself in the extensive quotation given above. It speaks volumes for the scholarship and sympathy, the insight and the tolerance of Dr Otto and the late Dr Abbott that they succeeded in distilling from the *bhakti* literature two such expositions of *bhakti* aspirations and experience as those in the foregoing paragraphs.

Pauranic Atmosphere of Much *Bhakti* Literature

One grave defect of this *bhakti* literature is what may be called the Pauranic stamp which mars so many pages. How deeply that Pauranic stamp affects almost the whole of Mahipati's narrative can be seen at a glance, for well-nigh every one of his moving stories makes frequent reference to those Pauranic Names and Narratives set

forth in the first two Appendices at the close of the present volume. The case of Krishna (see pp. 396-7 and 424-8) is alone sufficient to indicate what must be the influence of many of the *Puranas* so popular still all over India, with the account of his 16,108 wives and of his dalliance with the female cowherds. The growing disquiet among India's educated people regarding these aspects of their sacred literature is one of the most striking indications of India's slow but sure acceptance of 'new standards of historical truth and ethical holiness.' Under the influence of these 'new standards' an increasing number of Hindu scholars are retaining these Pauranic narratives only as emblem, imagery and allegory, this allegorical principle of interpretation being more and more applied also to certain difficult aspects of the great and wonderful *Bhagavadgita*. On this interesting point one of the most sympathetic and understanding of scholars on Indian history, Edgar W. Thompson, M. A., himself twenty-five years in India and author of the excellent *History of India* for Indian High Schools and Colleges, writes in his latest book :

' Indeed, it would be highly inconvenient and repugnant to the feelings of many modern Hindus, if the *Gita* were to be regarded as a narrative of fact....It would follow inevitably from an acceptance of the *Gita* as history, that Krishna had inculcated, in the most literal sense, the necessity for and the righteousness of killing....but there may be room for doubt, if its history is not assumed. If, however, we believe that a living Krishna, in bodily form, on the particular occasion described by the poem, actually spoke the words attributed to him, then there is no escape from the conclusion that Krishna sanctioned warfare of the most wanton and ruthless type. The teaching of the poem would be in flagrant contradiction of any doctrine of *Ahimsā* or *Satyāgraha* (soul-force). Mr. Gandhi, to whom the *Gita* has been as the staff of his life, seeks to turn the point of this objection by declaring that the setting of the poem is unhistorical—that it is an allegory. '

***Bhakti* and Pantheism Often Found Together**

It is, on the other hand, a tribute to the growing conscientiousness of Indian, particularly of Hindu, scholarship that a growing number of Hindu writers frankly recognize that emblem, imagery and allegory may too often be treated as a convenient hiding-place for both 'bad history and bad morality' and that the doctrines of the *Advaita Vedānta* have helped to blur the ineffaceable distinction between fact and fiction. No more eloquent protest has ever been made, and certainly none by greater authority, against the inadequate historical sense and defective historical methods of Indian students, than was made some years ago by that greatest of all Eastern savants, the late Dr Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar on the occasion of the opening of the Bhandarkar Research Institute in Poona. These things in no way imply any lack of appreciation of India's marvellous *Gita*, still less of the *bhakti* literature which the *Gita* inspired; they simply recognize that only an 'indolent and shallow syncretism' can overlook the fact that the doctrines and practices of opposing sects and schools of Hindu thought are strangely blended in the greatest of India's religious classics, and that the Hindu Pantheists and Dualists, the followers of Shankara's Monistic philosophy of the Absolute and the *bhakti* believers in a Personal God, alike claim the *Gita* as their authoritative book of devotion. Hence it is that it is true to say on the one hand with Dr Barnett in his book on *The Lord's Song* that the *Gita* has for its aim the setting forth of 'a consecration of life's every work to the selfless service of God, and an Infinite Love that at every place and every time pours forth its illimitable grace to all that seek after it,' and that it is equally true to say that the *Gita's* testimony to a Personal God is marred by so often 'veering away from this God to

the bare and inconceivable Absolute of the *Advaita*,' about which the great Kabir cried out of the depths of his soul's need that 'the Impersonal' did 'not satisfy' his soul.

An Advaitic Strain In Much Marathi Bhakti

Such facts as the foregoing help to explain the remarkable mingling all over Maharashtra of Vaishnavite (*Hari* = हरि) and Shaivite (*Hara* = हर) elements in the popular worship, and may throw light on an opinion widely held that over ninety per cent of Hindus still hold to the *Advaitist*, Monistic, Pantheistic view of an Impersonal Deity. They are also in line with the statements made by Professor R. D. Ranade, M. A., on pages 178-9 of his notable work published last year entitled *Indian Mysticism : Mysticism In Maharashtra*, being the seventh volume in the great work *History of Indian Philosophy* projected by S. K. Belvalkar, M. A., Ph. D., of Poona and Professor Ranade of Allahabad. Though Professor Ranade agrees that 'Farquhar fitly calls Dnyandeve the "Coryphaeus" of the whole *Bhakti* movement in the Maratha country,' nevertheless he (Ranade) is able to say that 'the philosophical grounding of Dnyandeve, as evidenced in the *Dnyaneshwari*, is more or less of the *Advaitic* kind, though occasionally here and there some concession is made to the other schools of the *Vedānta*. Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar once expressed his great inability to understand how the Maratha Saints could reconcile *Advaitism* with *Bhakti*.' On this R. D. Ranade makes the comment :

'It is exactly this reconciliation which is made in Mysticism generally, and more particularly in the Mysticism of the Maharashtra school which is worth while noting. The philosophical foundation of the *Amritanubhava* is somewhat in a different line. There we see how Dnyandeve is under the influence of the philosophy of the *Shiva-Sūtras* when he refers to such terms as *Pinda*, *Pada Shiva* and *Shakti*.' And again later; 'Dnyandeve's spiritual Mysticism reconciles both Monism and Pluralism. "Not in the

Monism of Shankaracharya, nor in the Dualism that is quite satisfied to remain two, but in the spiritual experience that transcends and includes them both, is peace to be found" (Macnicol). It is not our business here to enter into a philosophical discussion of the nature of Mysticism. But we may say that it does not regard the duality of devotion and the unity of mystical experience as contradictory of each other.'

Pioneers of Indian Religious Reform

If we are disposed to pass severe judgments on the *bhakti* saints in Mahipati's biographical and autobiographical pages for their habitual references to the Pauranic stories which are often marred by such easy-going morality, let us remember on the one hand that such stories provided the chief, if not the only, quarry in that age for religious vocabulary and meditation in the peoples' vernacular; and on the other hand that these same *bhakti* saints, by their experience and message of a Personal God, raised against themselves the cry of Hindu conservatism, 'Our religion in danger!' How fierce the persecution they incurred is clear from many of Mahipati's stories, some of which are epic in character; for example, the opposition Eknath encountered from the orthodox Hindus at Paithan on the Godavari and the monumental patience and charity with which he confronted it. When we remember how novelty of all kinds, religious novelty in particular, is ever an affront to love of ease, and how the followers of Hindu *bhakti* were regarded as endangering all that was counted dear and best in immemorial Hinduism, we shall not be slow to give the meed of praise due to those intrepid religious reformers represented by the pioneers of the *bhakti* school, even though we today now see that there were still clinging to their message some of the defects of the teaching which they were slowly outgrowing. Considerations such as these compel the conclusion that the followers of the *bhakti* school, both in

their noble protest against the unsatisfying conception of a Monistic, Pantheistic, Impersonal God, and in their fearlessness as religious pioneers in those dark and stormy times, are to be regarded as the heralds of the nobler and purer India for which we all still labour and aspire.

Political India's Need of Religion

We are convinced that in these intense days when India's political future is trembling in the balance, there is more need than ever that India's people should imitate the pioneers of the *bhakti* school by keeping the spiritual vision fixed on the high destiny of the individual soul. Only so can individual leaders be inspired for the vast tasks of reconstruction that await the Indian nation. Of course, if we are to follow to their strict logical issue the tenets laid down by the ancient Sages of India's *Advaita Vedānta*, no rational being should concern himself with politics, for 'there is a rift, an irreconcilable opposition, between India's present occupation with politics, and the ancient philosophy of the *Advaita Vedānta*.' Much the same may be said of those who lose themselves in the 'ecstatic' extremes of *bhakti* moods, for though little children are not trodden to death as in the case of Gora the Potter, it yet remains a sad blot on the *bhakti* pilgrim centre of Pandharpur that its appalling infant death rate has sometimes figured among the very highest in India. Modern India, however, is very painfully realizing that it is not by solitary contemplation of the Deity, either by the *Dnyana Marga* of pantheistic philosophy or by the *Bhakti Marga* of devotional ecstasy, that her needy millions will rise to their destined greatness. Indeed, India is today in danger of swinging to an extreme in the other direction as seen in the tendency (not unnatural in view of many facts) of many of her most earnest sons and daughters to make poli-

tics their religion. But even the politically-minded will never be inwardly satisfied either by political activity or by social service.

Helping ' Things Human ' By ' Things Divine '

In his interesting book, *East And West In Religion* published a few months ago, Dr Sir S. Radhakrishnan relates a story told by Aristoxenes of the third century B. C. about the visit of an Indian philosopher to Socrates. ' Socrates told the Indian stranger that his work consisted in enquiring about the life of men and the Indian smiled and said that *none could understand things human who did not understand things divine.*' The words we have italicized have a very real message to India at this momentous hour in her history, and Dr. Radhakrishnan makes the double comment: ' It is a common temptation, to which Indian thinkers have fallen more than once victims, that spirit is all that counts while life is an indifferent illusion, and all efforts directed to improvement of man's outer life and society are sheer folly;' but on the other hand, ' Rabindranath Tagore uses the visible world as a means of shadowing forth the invisible,' for 'he touches the temporal with the light of the eternal.' Happy the nation that has two sons such as Rabindranath and Gandhiji who, despite their contrasts and (may be) their defects, so constantly amid all the national struggle 'touch the temporal with the light of the eternal.' Our own deep conviction is that if, in the social, moral and religious revolution that is convulsing India far more deeply than are politics or economics, her people will but follow the light that comes from two such sons and from all other sources, then, however revolutionary the changes, religious or political, that may sweep over the land, ' nothing which is beautiful and good in India's heritage need be lost.' It is because we believe Mahipati's stories help to build a bridge of passage from ancient India to

the new India that is to be that we send them forth as a preparation for the fuller light that is dawning everywhere in wonderful Hindustan.

Request, Acknowledgment, Recognition

We would fain crave the indulgence of our readers for the defects that must of necessity mar the pioneer translation of so extensive and difficult a piece of work as is the *Bhaktavijaya*, and prepared for the press under such difficult conditions as these two volumes have had to be. With the chief author gone from this mortal sphere before printing had begun, followed by his companion in authorship when the second volume was only half printed, it has sometimes appeared as if the task could not be completed.

A special word of gratitude is due to the cooperation of the entire staff at the Aryabhushan Press, Poona; their uniform patience, courtesy and help have alone made possible the publication of this work. In this as in so much else besides they have shown themselves worthy to be called 'Servants of India.'

Finally, it gives us pleasure to inform our readers that the first nine volumes in this Poet Saints of Maharashtra series have received the recognition of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay Government, by his sanction of their use in teachers' libraries. This was signified in his Office Notification No. 86 (a) -I-C of 15th May, 1934, and published in Part II of *The Bombay Government Gazette* dated May 24, 1934.

June, 1934,
United Theological College of
Western India,
7 Sholapur Road,
Poona Camp:
Office of the Poet
Saints of Maharashtra Series

J. F. Edwards

BHAKTAVIJAYA

BY

MAHIPATI

VOLUME II

CHAPTER XXXI

RAMDAS OF DAKUR

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Krishna.

STORIES OF THE SAINTS BURN UP SIN

1. Victory to Thee, the Husband of Rukmini, Dweller at Dwarka. Mover of the heart, Cloud of intelligence, Father of Brabmadev, Ornament of Thy *bhaktas*, Slayer of the monsters, Shri Krishna. 2. Victory to Thee, Pervader of the universe, Lord of all, Giver of the gift of final deliverance, infinitely generous, Purifier of the sinful, Saviour of the world, Husband of Radhika, Govinda. 3. Victory to Thee, who hast taken forms with qualities, O cloud-dark One, the most beneficent Being, Dweller in the universe, *Atmaram* (Divine Spirit). May I have love of Thee in my worship. 4. Victory to Thee, Dweller on the banks of the Gomati, *Guru* of the world, Lord Ranchhod. Let the shadow of Thy mercy fall upon me so that my heart may remain steady at Thy feet. 5. Victory to Thee, the Bee on the lotus-heart of Thy *bhaktas*. Thou who dost exist and art intelligence and joy, Root of joy, place my heart at Thy lotus-feet. Do this for me, O Govinda. 6. Being my Helper, assist me to describe the wonderful stories of Thy *bhaktas*, by which the ears of Thy hearers in their love are delighted.

RAMDAS OF DAKUR AS PILGRIM TO DWARKA

7. And now listen, you pious people, to the interesting

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story, infinitely pure. As this story falls upon the ear, all one's sins are burnt away in a moment's time. 8. Seeing he *bhakti* of Ramdas, the antique idol (of Krishna) at Dwarka came to Dakur; Dwarka is three hundred miles beyond Dakur. 9. There was a Brahman there by name of Ramdas, supremely pious and wise. He used to beg for uncooked food and with it he supported his family. 10. He was always desireless and contented. All mental unrest was put aside. Day and night he continually repeated God's name. 11. On the *Ekadashi* (the eleventh day) of every fortnight he was accustomed to go to Dwarka. Ramdas in devotion held to this regular rule. 12. In a piece of *Saya* wood he scooped out a place, and in it he planted the *tulsi*. Holding this in his hand he used to go to Dwarka. 13. As he walked along the road full of love, he continued describing with joy the goodness of Hari. He had abandoned all interest in his body and was full of *vairagya* (the idea of indifference to worldly things). 14. Whenever Dwarka came into sight his heart was full of supreme joy, just as when a miser suddenly comes upon some money as he walks along a road; 15. or as when a young bride has been roughly treated at the house of her mother-in-law and sees her own home she is full of joy; or just as men rejoice when after a season of drought, clouds moisten the earth. 16. Repentant in heart, he would bathe at the bank of the Gomati, and then after *manasa-puja* (worshipping God in his heart) he would go to the great door of the temple. 17. Making there a prostrate *namaskar* with reverence and putting aside all pride of body he was accustomed to say, 'O God, I am a devoted suppliant of Thine. End my rebirths and redeaths.' 18. He carried the *tulsi* plant along with him. With reverence he used to pluck off a flower and give it to God and after worshipping the Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven), he would plead pitifully in devotion. 19. He used to say, 'O Purifier of the sinner,

One with the eagle banner, this is my worship as a helpless one.' Then making a *namaskar* to God he was accustomed to return to Dakur. 20. He used to remain one day in his house, and then start again on his journey. For twenty-five years he had made these trips to Dwarka.

KRISHNA'S REQUEST TO BE TAKEN FROM DWARKA

21. His body had now become weak. Old age had come upon him. On one occasion therefore he came to Dwarka and thus pleaded with God: 22. 'My body has become weak. I have now no more strength to come here. Love me still, dear Lord.' With this he placed his head at the god's feet. 23. Tears flowed from his eyes and he was not able to continue his praise. He then said, 'This is the last time I shall see Thee. I shall not be able to come again.' 24. As Ramdas said this the Dweller in the universe was stirred with emotion. With His four arms He held his *bhakta* in tight embrace. 25. God said to Ramdas, 'You have suffered much for my sake. I owe you much for your service. I can never repay you. 26. Your service has been great. Now take Me to your town.' Ramdas said to Him, 'O Krishna, how am I to take Thee?' 27. God said to him, 'I will give My chariot. Harness the horses and place Me in the chariot at night and start. I will come to you.' 28. Ramdas then brought the chariot and seated in it the dark-blue complexioned One, and with love in his heart the Lover of His *bhaktas* came to Dakur. 29. Ramdas now said, 'O Bhagwant, where shall I hide Thee? When the priests hasten from Dwarka here, they will punish me.' 30. At dawn at Dwarka the priests came at the hour of the wave offering, and to their amazement the idol was not in the temple.

RAMDAS, ACCUSED BY DWARKA PRIESTS OF THEFT, TELLS A LIE

31. As they thought about the matter one of them said 'Ramdas was here, and he must have taken the god away.'

I see the tracks of the chariot on the road.' 32. The priests having seen the chariot-tracks, all of them came to Dakur. But Ramdas had taken the idol and had thrown it into the pond. 33. The priests said to Ramdas, 'You have brought the idol from Dwarka. Show us where it is.' Such was their request. 34. Ramdas told them a lie: 'I did not bring the Life of the world here. Search in my house for Him, that Ornament of His *bhaktas*, that supreme Spirit.' 35. The priests then went into the town and searched from house to house. They examined every tank and well. 36. Then they began to investigate a pool of water outside the village. The idol of Krishna was struck with a dagger in the chest and blood gushed out from it. 37. Reasoning in their minds on this, they said, 'We have found Lord Ranchhod.' They then dived into the water and drew out the Husband of Rukmini. 38. Then bringing a chariot there they quickly placed the idol in it. Ramdas became greatly concerned and spoke to God. 39. He said, 'O Lover of Thy *bhaktas*, Helper of the lowly, art Thou going to abandon me and go away? For Thy sake, O Husband of Rukmini, I told a lie.' 40. The Life of the world came into his meditation and said to His *bhakta*, 'Let your mind be at rest, and continue your worship of me. 41. Placing my hands upon my side I remain at the door of Pundalik. So I shall for ever remain with you at Dakur.'

HIS OFFER TO GIVE GOLD IN WEIGHT
EQUAL TO THE IMAGE

42. Ramdas then replied, 'The priests will take Thee away and how shall I prevent this? I do not know.' 43. The merciful One then said to him, 'Go to the priests and promise them gold equal to my weight. 44. Your wife's nose-ring weighs a grain, I will become of that weight and will stay with you here.' 45. Ramdas, happy in heart, went to the priests and said, 'Since I have brought

the idol from Dwarka, let it remain here. 46. I will give gold of the same weight as the idol.' This promise was agreeable to all, for Narayan is the giver of reason. They said, 'Bring the god here.' 47. Going to where the townspeople were seated, he said to them 'I am going to give gold to the priests equal to the weight of the idol. 48. In that case the idol will become mine. All of you be witnesses of this.' The crooked-minded laughed as they heard these words. 49. They said, 'You are weak, poor, and without anything. You have not even food enough to eat. How can you give gold? We are surprised.'

HARI'S MIGHT IS ABLE TO REMOVE HIS

BHAKTAS' WEAKNESS

50. Ramdas exclaimed, 'The mighty Hari has come to my house and yet you call me poor; you seem to feel no shame in your heart at this. 51. The Daughter of the Ocean (Lakshmi) came suddenly to the house of a poor person to give a gift. To call such a person poor shows your foolishness. 52. If in a box of iron a touchstone is suddenly found, it is useless to speak of the former value of the box. Why should one weary his tongue by such talk? 53. If the Ganges water flowed into the sewerage of a town, then anyone who might find fault with it would bring blame on himself. 54. When Sarasvati is pleased with a dumb person and teaches him to study, then anyone who calls him a fool will bring blame on himself. 55. So even when the Husband of Lakshmi, Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven), is pleased with me, they do not hesitate to call me weak.' 56. Some people remarked, 'Let us watch this fun and we shall bear witness.' The scales were fixed and the Husband of Ramā (Krishna) was put in one. 57. The priest said to him, 'Go and bring your gold.' Ramdas at once went to his house. Holding the nose-ring in his fist, he at once returned. 58. People said to him, 'Show us the gold; though you went to your house you have

come back empty-handed.' 59. Opening his fist, the people began to scoff, saying, 'We think this will make a great quantity of gold!' 60. Then Ramdas, joining his hands palm to palm, prayed to the Husband of Rukmini, and said, 'O Helper of the helpless, 'older of the *Sharang* bow, Saviour of the lowly, Shri Krishna. 61. Satyabhama gave to Narad a gift of Krishna but in return he accepted from Rukmini a *tulsi* leaf and gave her the victory of securing Him. 62. I am poorer than she. Let Thy pride in me remain.' Saying thus he placed the gold that weighed a grain in the scale. 63. As the nose-ring was placed in the scale, He in Whom is the Infinite universe rose to its level. The *bhakta* cried out 'Victory, Victory' and the gods threw down flowers. 64. They exclaimed, 'Blessed blessed are you, Ramdas, for you have bought God. You gave a nose-ring, and acquired for yourself the Lord of Dwarka.' 65. They said 'Blessed, blessed is your *bhakti*. Blessed, blessed are your good deeds.' The priests then returned to Dwarka.

A NEW IMAGE INSTALLED

66. There they made a new idol, and installed it in the town of Dwarka. The idol of Krishna remains at Dakur because of Ramdas. 67. Today people still go to Dwarka, but first they come to Dakur to see and worship Krishna and then they go on to Dwarka.

68. The next chapter will arouse interest. It is about the ancient idol at Mathura. Seeing the *bhakti* of a celibate, the ancient idol of Mathura will come to Hardwar. 69. God records many lives and increases the glory of His *bhaktas*. Mahipati in his love describes His goodness.

70. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-first deeply delightful chapter: it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XXXII

KALYAN AND NIRADHAR THE CELIBATE

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lord of Dwarka.

KALYAN AND NIRADHAR AS PILGRIMS

1. Let the hearers listen with reverence to the infinitely holy story of how the ancient idol at Mathura went to Hardwar. 2. A pilgrimage had gathered at Rameshwar at the night-festival in honour of Shiva. Two Brahmans from the Northern country had at that time arrived there. 3. Both of them lived at sacred bathing-places. Both were holy Brahmans and indifferent to worldly things. By day and by night they worshipped Hari in their love. 4. Asking one another about their domestic affairs, one of the Brahmans said to the other, 'All my family live at Hardwar.' 5. The other replied, 'My birthplace is the country of Gaud. But I have here no mother, father, brother, or any close friends aside from Hari. 6. Visiting sacred places, and the seven salvation-giving cities, I have now come to Rameshwar. I am as a *brahmachari* (a chaste unmarried man) and Niradhar is my name.' 7. Kalyan the Brahman hearing these words was pleased. Both of them then joined together and visited the sacred bathing-places and sacred cities. 8. Day and night they sang the description of the good deeds of Shri Hari, and they discussed among themselves publicly what was soul and what was not soul. 9. Afterwards visiting together many sacred bathing places, the two finally came to Mathura. They bathed at the banks of the Jumna and then went to worship Krishna. 10. They remained there three nights but suddenly Kalyan had a chill. Although he used the best remedies, the chills and fever would not leave him. His body became very thin. 11. According

to one's former deeds suffering never leaves the body, just as the moon experiences consumption (waning of its phases), and as Indra has a thousand holes (in his body). 12. Ill luck unceasingly persecuted Shiva which made Him exceedingly sad; he then took deadly *Halahal* poison and thereby His throat became blue.

NIRADHAR NURSES SICK KALYAN

13. Well, to continue the story. The two remained at Mathura. The *Brahmachari*, just with the intention of obliging others, continued his kind service of caring for Kalyan. 14. Those who are called saints in this world but who have in their hearts no compassion for creatures can never attain Shri Hari even to the end of time. 15. But this *Brahmachari* was not like that. He was the very embodiment of speaking the truth, of kindness to others, and of compassion towards all creatures. 16. The *Brahmachari* sat near him day and night and gave him medicine and a wholesome diet. For six months Kalyan lay there in his bodily suffering. 17. During all this time the *Brahmachari* remained near him and cared for him day and night. He was continually praying, 'O merciful One, O *Vanamali* (Krishna), make him better.' 18. Finally the time of suffering ended and Kalyan regained his health.

NIRADHAR'S KINDNESS REPAID BY A MARRIAGE OFFER

Kalyan said to the *Brahmachari*, 'From now you are my dear relative and close friend, my all-in-all (or my very god), 19. Your name is rightly 'The supporter of the supportless.' I can never repay your kindness, even during all my rebirths. 20. My wife, sons and daughters, all remain at my home. In this foreign land you, a *bhakta* of Vishnu, came to help me. 21. My daughter is unmarried at my home, a would-be-bride of eight years of age. If you will come to my home I will give her to you.' 22. The *Brahmachari* hearing him, said in reply, 'I shall never live the life of a

householder. Why do you want to put me into the sorrowful domestic life?' 23. Kalyan said to him, 'How can there be any harm from the domestic life? Krishna Himself will undertake the burden of it. 24. I vow this in this holy purifying sacred city of Mathura. Accept the gift of my daughter, O *bhaktu* of Hari, indifferent to worldly things.' 25. The *Brahmachari* said to him, 'You are now an old man, dwelling at sacred bathing places. When you go home you will find that your wife will not accept this proposition. 26. If I now accept your proposition, and later on if the marriage does not take place, then I shall feel that my life has gone in vain. 27. I shall be one without the life of a *Brahmachari* and at the same time without the home of a householder.' Kalyan said to him, 'I call Krishna as a witness to my proposition.' 28. Both then went to the great door of the temple and there worshipped the feet of Shri Krishna. He (Kalyan) seated the *Brahmachari* and poured water on his hands, 29. saying, 'I have given my daughter to you. Come to my house and there be married. Madhavrao (Krishna) of Mathura, Life of the world, is witness to this.' 30. After worshipping the feet of Shri Krishna, both hastened from there and after journeying for three weeks they arrived at Hardwar. 31. Kalyan went to his home but no one would speak to him. He had been living at sacred bathing places and was now aged in body. 32. All become your friends in times of prosperity but finally they abandon you. Therefore the mind should always be watchful.

KALYAN'S UNFILIAL SON AND CRITICAL WIFE

33. His son said to him, 'You have wandered a great deal but the end of your life has not yet come. We do not understand who this *Brahmachari* is whom you have brought here.' 34. When Kalyan was resting in his home, he said to his wife, 'When I was

at the sacred bathing place at Mathura, I suffered from chills and fever.' 35. She said to him, 'You have not laid up for yourself good deeds sufficient to enable you to die at the sacred bathing place. Now you have returned home to show your face here.' 36. Kalyan said to her, 'Listen to what I have to say. When life is given to one there is no death. In the company of this *Brahmachari* I have experienced much joy. 37. In a foreign country he gave me proper food and medicines.' She replied to her husband, 'What is there strange in that? 38. When anyone is in the company of others they always care for one another. You are now wearied, lie quietly and go to sleep.' 39. The *Brhmachari* who was sleeping near the door heard this conversation.

KALYAN'S WIFE RAISES OBJECTIONS

Kalyan then said to his wife, 40. 'When I was at the sacred city of Mathura I went to the great door of the temple, and there I agreed definitely to offer my daughter to this *Brahmachari*.' 41. His wife said to him, 'Make another marriage, and the daughter who may be born give her to him.' 42. Kalyan said to her, 'If you offer your daughter to a *bhakta* of Hari there is no end to your holy deeds. Do not break my promise to him.' 43. She replied, 'I would rather at once push my daughter into a well, or else keep her at home unmarried. 44. But I will never put my daughter into the home of a *bhakta* of Hari.' Kalyan asked his son but he too would not accept the proposition. 45. On the next day both went to the door of the king's palace. There they related what had taken place at Mathura. 46. The Brahman said, 'O king, my promise has gone for naught. I feel that I shall have to go on the road to the city of death. 47. In my love I made a promise. Here at home my wife and son will not listen to it. O king, speak to them, and cause them to give my

daughter to him.' 48. The king said to the Brahman, 'I do not feel that your words are true. When you made this agreement at Mathura, whom did you place as a witness;?' 49. Nirashraya (the unsheltered) *Brahmachari* said to the king, 'The Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven), the Enemy of Mura, the Dweller at Mathura, Shri Krishna, is the witness. 50. I place as witness Him by whose mere wish infinite universes are created and destroyed. He is the Ancient of Days, the Lord of Rukmini.' 51. Hearing him the king replied, 'You say you have placed the Husband of Rukmini as your witness. Let Him come here quickly, if He will, and bear the witness before us. 52. In that case I will cause your daughter to be given to this *Brahmachari*.'

NIRADHAR BRINGS KRISHNA AS WITNESS

Hearing these words the *Brahmachari* said, 'I will bring the Life of the world here to bear witness.' 53. He immediately departed and for three weeks he travelled. Arriving at Mathura he saw and worshipped the beautiful dark-complexioned One. 54. He said to Him, 'O God infinite and supreme, come now with me in order to bear witness. If Thou dost not come, my life as *Brahmachari* will have been in vain.' 55. God said to him, 'How can a stone idol walk?' The other replied, 'It will walk just as it can talk. 56. I am *Niradhar*, (one without a supporter); Thou, O Hari, art my shelter. Now merciful One, Lord of the world, come with me as far as there.' 57. Hearing him say this, Shri Krishna quickly followed him to carry out the purpose of His *bhaktu*. But He said to the *Brahmachari*, 'Do not look back at Me. 58. If you do look back, I shall stop in that very place.' Saying this the Life of the world walked along behind him. 59. This glorious and brilliant idol, with lustrous ornaments, spread light. On His feet the *Nepur* and the anklets tinkled. Walking all night they arrived at Hardwar. 60. The Pervader of the universe,

having approached the city, was only a mile from it now. Here the Lord of the heart (Krishna) stood still. 61. The Brahman looked back and there he saw Krishna remaining standing. His brilliancy could not be contained in the very sky. He said to the Brahman, 62. 'I told you before that if you looked back I should remain there. Now go to the king and ask him to come here to meet me.' 63. The *Brahmachari* named *Nirashraya* (one without shelter) at once started. He entered the royal assembly and said:

KRISHNA'S IMAGE AS WITNESS

64. 'He who took the side of Ambarish and who showed contempt for the *Muni* Durvas, He, the Dweller upon the sea of milk, Giver of final deliverance, I have brought Him to give evidence. 65. He who killed Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Indrajit, and delivered the gods from prison, Raghav the Dweller in Ayodhya, Him I have brought to give evidence. 66. When He was at Gokul He went from house to house stealing butter. His mother fastened Him to the handle of her churn. The Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven), the Enemy of Mura, I have brought here to give witness. 67. Having killed Kans and Chanur, He installed Ugrasen over the kingdom. The Life of the world I have brought to Hardwar to give evidence. 68. When pure Draupadi was insulted by Dushshasan, the hand of the Infinite One clothed her with raiment. The Advocate of His *bhaktas*, Husband of Rukmini, I have brought here to give His testimony.' 69. Hearing the *Brahmachari* say this, all the people were greatly astonished. The king rushed forward to worship the Brahman's feet. 70. The king started to welcome Krishna. There were eagle banners. Drums and musical instruments sounded loudly. The king went to receive the Brahman, and the *Vaishnavas* shouted out the names of God. 71. There took place at once a united cry of ' Victory, Victory.' The godsshowered

down innumerable flowers. The noble Yadava (Krishna) had come from Mathura to give His evidence. 72. While the saints and good people were singing the God's praise, the king came and prostrated himself before it. He saw the idol in its brilliancy and with its beautiful four arms. 73. Ornaments glistened in its crown. Around its waist was the yellow robe. Seeing the noble Yadava thus, all rejoiced. 74. The king then asked the *bairagis*, saints and *bhaktas*, ' You are accustomed to go to Mathura. Is this the very idol from there ? ' 75. The saints said to the king, ' This is Shri Krishna Who dwells at Mathura, the Life of the world, Who has now rushed to carry out the purpose of His *bhaktas*. '

NIRADHAR'S MARRIAGE

76. The king said to the rich citizens, ' Prepare at once whatever is needed for the bride. 77. I shall perform the duties on the side of the bridegroom. ' Hearing this, arrangements for the wedding were made and a great pavilion was erected, *Panch Kos* (ten miles) in circumference. 78. Hearing the news that Narayan Himself had come to the wedding, an innumerable number of learned people assembled for the glory of the *bhakta*. 79. The Husband of Lakshmi having come there, no lack of anything was felt. Innumerable instruments were played and the gods came to look on. 80. When the marriage curtain was held up the Brahman said, ' May Bhagwan the Dweller at *Vaikunth* (heaven) protect this bride and bridegroom. 81. He who took the form of a fish, and killed the *Daitya* Shankha by dashing him on a stone, may He, Dweller on the sea of milk, Holder of the disk (Krishna), protect this bride and bridegroom. 82. When Pralhad was persecuted, God came out from the pillar, so may Bhagwan in the form of a half-man and half-lion protect this bride and bridegroom. 83. Eating dirt at the house of Nand. He opened His mouth to His mother and showed in it the

whole universe; may He, the Son of Yashoda, the Enemy of Mura, protect this bride and bridegroom. 84. He who removed the used-up plates at the house of Dharma and in many ways protected the Pandavas, may He, the Lover of His *bhaktas*, Shri Hari, protect this bride and bridegroom. 85. And now, in the *Kali Yuga*, the Life of the world has come walking from Mathura. May He, Shri Krishna, Dweller at Mathura, protect this bride and bridegroom.' 86. Having repeated this eight-verse formula, the Brahmans completed the marriage. The festival continued for four days, and then people saw the wedding parties on their way.

GOD THE CREATOR OF HIS *BHAKTA'S* FAITH

87. The idol has remained at Hardwar, and a new idol was installed at Mathura. Proud of His *bhaktas*, Shri Hari has performed many wonderful deeds. 88. Seated at many sacred places He has saved His *bhaktas*. Just as anyone conceives of God in reverence, God becomes like that to him. 89. In this Southern country at Shri Pandhari, in the Western country in the city of Dwarka, and in the North at Hardwar, He waits for His *bhaktas*. 90. In the East is Jagannath (Lord of the world); His four-armed idol is glorious. And now may the hearers with quiet attentive minds listen to the further stories of the *bhaktas*.

91. In the next chapter we shall have the interesting story of the *avatar* of Akrur by name of Surdas. The narrative about him is exceedingly delightful. Let the hearers listen with reverence. 92. Shri Pandurang may be called a lake of joy. The stories of the *bhaktas* may be called great lotus flowers. Mahipati as a bumble bee comes there and drinks of their honey.

93. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-second very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XXXIII

SURDAS THE BLIND SAINT

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Gopal Krishna.

KRISHNA'S WIFE SATYABHAMA, AKRUR AND
KRISHNA'S CURSE

1. In the *Kali Yuga* the story of the *bhakta* Surdas is a very special one. Let the saints and all good people listen to it with attention. 2. During the Krishna avatarship at Dwarka, Satyabhama was His specially loved wife. Suddenly at her house the *bhakta* Akrur arrived. 3. Satyabhama gave him a seat and Akrur sat down after paying her his respects. Without any hesitation she told him her affairs:—4. 'Shri Krishna does not come to my house as He formerly did. Now, Akrur, explain things to him, and bring us together. 5. Shri Hari is subservient to you. I know this in my heart. Akrur, beseech the Enemy of Mura, and cause me to meet Him. 6. This fire of separation has severely burnt me. Again and again I beseech you, O Akrur, to cause me to meet the Son of Vasudev. 7. To whom shall I tell this secret matter, and who will look upon me with an eye of compassion? Now go at once, and cause me to meet Him, the Lord of the world. 8. Although He has sixteen thousand homes for His wives, still He sits at the home of Rukmini. Cause me now to meet with this Pervader of the Universe, the Enemy of Mura.' 9. Akrur thought to himself, 'If Shri Hari does not come at once, this beautiful one will give up her life. 10. Then Shri Krishna will be angry with me.' Realizing this fact, the *bhakta* Akrur himself took the form of Krishna. 11. He said to her, 'O mother, regain consciousness. I will bring Hari at once.' So Krishna Himself appeared at once to her sight and stood before her.

AKRUR CURSED BY KRISHNA

12. Shri Hari then said to Akrur, 'What was the thought in your mind, that when I was not at home, you took a false guise? 13. Therefore, Akrur, in the *Kali Yuga* amongst the mortals you will become blind.' And turning to Satyabhama He said, 'In the *Kali Yuga* you will be a maidservant.' 14. The *bhakta* Akrur hearing these words joined his hands together palm to palm and thus pleaded: 'O *Atmaram* (O God), Thou knowest perfectly the thoughts of my mind. 15. If Thou should not come at once, Satyabhama would give up her life. In order to give her courage, O Life of the world, I took Thy form.' 16. Hari replied, 'I know, O Akrur, the effort you are making. In the *Kali Yuga* you will become an *avatar* for the salvation of men. 17. Outwardly I have cursed you but there is no hatred in my heart.' Akrur replied, 'Thou art Mother and Father. In the *Kali Yuga* give me the vision of Thee.' 18. Hari replied, 'When you are blind, you will meet with the maidservant Satyabhama and I will manifest Myself at that time, and unite you with My essential form.'

BLIND SURDAS AS AKRUR'S AVATAR

19. In the country where Mathura is situated, a great saint Surdas appeared as an *avatar* of Akrur. Although blind from his birth, day and night he repeated the names of the Lord of the universe. 20. When sitting down, when sleeping, when eating, he was constantly thinking of Hari. And in the privacy of his heart he remembered the former events of his having been a *yogabhrashita* (one whose austerities have not been completed). 21. With love he performed his *kirtans*, and sang the names of God in verses he composed. Continually composing poetry, he called upon the Good Being. 22. Now it happened on a certain day, that a pilgrimage took place at Mathura and

Surdas himself went there to see the idol of Shri Krishna. 23. At the great door of the temple he lovingly made a prostrate *namaskar*. Joining his hands together palm to palm he brought the form of God into his heart. 24. He exclaimed, ' O Shri Krishna, Purifier of the sinner, Ocean of compassion, Delight of the heart , I had committed no fault. O Life of the world, why didst Thou curse me ? 25. At the time of the *avatarship* of Krishna I was Akrur and I committed only one fault. Such is the witness that my heart gives me, O Govinda. 26. Kans sent me to Gokul to fetch Thee. When I went there Yashoda felt so sad. 27. When I was taking Thee away, Yashoda wept. Her anger then, O Gopal, is troubling me now. 28. The dissatisfaction of the people of Gokul, as I took Thee from them, has been visited upon me I think. 29. The *Gopis* (cowherdresses) loudly wept. They called out, "Give us back Shri Krishna as a gift in charity." I did not listen to them and therefore I am suffering this blindness. 30. Some let down their hair and wept aloud and some threw themselves before the chariot. Because of their anger, O Lord of the world, Thou must have cursed me. 31. Even if I did take the form of Krishna at the house of Satyabhama, it was no fault of mine, O Shri Hari. Thou art witness to this, O Enemy of Mura, Thou knowest the secrets of the heart. 32. Yet my heart bears witness that at Gokul I did commit a fault.' Tears now flowed from the eyes of Surdas.

SURDAS' SIGHT RESTORED

33. Listening to these pity-arousing words. Narayan was pleased and Surdas at once received his sight. 34. The *bhakta* saw before him with his own eyes the beautiful image of God with conch, shell, the disk and the club in His hands; four-armed in form, with His dark complexion and 35. His crown; His garland

reaching down to the feet and His *Kaustubh* jewel; His brilliant yellow robe wound around His waist; with his four *nepurs* and anklets jingling loudly; and dimming the light of millions of suns. 36. Seeing this form before him, Surdas prostrated himself on the ground. God said to him, 'I am pleased. Ask of Me any blessing.' 37. Embracing Him in love, Surdas said, 'I have this request only. I ask you to make my eyes as they were at first. 38. All through my life I never saw any object. Now I have stored up Thy form in my heart, O Govinda. 39. Though now Thou takest away my sight, I shall always have Thy form in my heart.' Hearing the words of Surdas the Lord of the heart (Krishna) smiled. 40. Bringing to His mind the form of Hari, this *bhakta* of His remained at Mathura. Now, you good people, listen to the story of what occurred further on.

TANSEN AND THE KING OF UJJAIN

41. In the city of Avanti (Ujjain) there was a pious, holy king. He had collected together five hundred singers. 42. The greatest among them was Tansen, an expert in music and exceedingly learned. At his singing, extinguished lamps became lighted. 43. The king said to Tansen at that time, 'I have hunted all over the world but I do not see any other singer better than you.' 44. Hearing this Tansen said, 'Do not say that. It is God who has made one better than the other. 45. "I am the Creator of the World," so said He who sits upon the lotus (Brahmadev). Then God created Vishvamitra and had him make all material things. 46. "My bed is the most majestic," thus said the ocean. God by the hands of Agasti caused him to sip its water. 47. Narad became proud, saying, "My singing is very beautiful," and Krishna then invited a bear and caused him to perform a *kirtan*. 48. When Maruti thought there was no monkey mightier than himself in the

world, Bharat subdued his pride. 49. Therefore no one should be called great or small.' Hearing these words of Tansen, the king was pleased. 50. The king said, 'If there are any singers now greater than you are, tell me of them quickly.'

SURDAS EXPERT IN SINGING

51. Tansen said to the king, 'The greatest expert in singing is Surdas at Mathura, the *avatar* of Akrur.' 52. The king said further to him, 'How many *ragas* (modes of songs) does Surdas sing?' Tansen brought a handful of sand from the Bhagirathi river, 53. and said, 'He knows as many as there are grains of sand.' The king hearing this was surprised. He sent a palanquin to Mathura and brought Surdas from there. 54. Honouring him in many ways the king prostrated himself before him. Because Surdas was a *Vaishnava* he worshipped him, making him sit upon the golden throne. 55. All the singers then assembled and sat down in the assembly hall, and Tansen then pleaded with Surdas. 56. He said, 'Cause all to listen to a *Kirtan* sung by your lips. The king has invited you to come here with that purpose in mind.' 57. Surdas said to Tansen, 'I am a dweller in *Vaikunth* (heaven). From there I have come to this world of mortals. There I sing the qualities of Hari. 58. If you have a liking for the same, I will describe for you in brief the qualities of Hari.' Then taking the *vina* in his hand he properly tuned it with the seven musical notes. 59. As Surdas was singing, Ganesh sounded the cymbals, and Sarasvati taking the *vina* helped him in his sweet tone. 60. All the *Gandharvas* (heavenly singers) became absorbed in the music. So also Rambha, Urvashi and Menaka, and the Husband of *Ramā* (Vishnu) while he was performing the *kirtan* came there and danced in joy. 61. Even He whom the *yogis* when sitting on iron spikes are unable to bring into their contemplation, even

He danced in Surdas' *kirtan*. It was wonderful. 62. Although the *munis* perform austerities, they cannot attain Him by their ceremonial rites. Yet at the *kirtan* of Surdas He danced. This is novel indeed. 63. He whose limits are unknown by Indra, Chandra (the moon), Brahmadev and Shiva, even He in joy danced in front of Surdas. 64. Thus singing, he (Surdas) performed his *kirtan* with the loud acclaim of God's name. He described the good deeds performed in the *avatarship* of Krishna. 65. For one month Surdas remained at Avanti (Ujjain) city. He set all the men and women of the city to worshipping God. Full of love, they wagged their heads.

KRISHNA UNITES SURDAS AND THE HANDMAID IN HIS ESSENTIAL FORM

66. Now it happened on a certain day that the king went to his palace and his wives pleaded with him, joining hands palm to palm. 67. They said, 'The *Vaishnava bhakta* Surdas is continually singing of the good deeds of Hari. Our desire is that we should listen to his *kirtan*.' 68. Hearing this the king replied, 'Surdas is without sight, therefore you need not hesitate about bringing him here.' 69. The king's five hundred wives and all concubines sat together with modesty and undivided attention and they invited Surdas to come. 70. Seating him upon the golden throne they lovingly worshipped him. Surdas then took the *vina* and began to sing. 71. All these beautiful women became absorbed in listening to him. Now listen to what had happened then. In the *avatarship* of Krishna, the Lord Shri Krishna had cursed Satyabhama. 72. That beautiful daughter of Satrajit had now become a slave in the palace. Now as Surdas performed his *kirtan* she came rushing into the place. 73. Hearing his beautiful song she forgot all bodily consciousness, just as a deer when hearing the sound of music becomes lovingly absorbed in it. 74. As

she walked along at that time, she did not consider either land or water, and at that moment Surdas regained his sight. 75. Surdas said to her, 'The tank yonder is filled with water.' Then becoming at once ashamed, the women drew the curtain. 76. 'He has sight', they said to one another. Then being ashamed they sat hiding themselves. 77. Seeing them all alone, Shri Krishna manifested Himself there and He united in his own essential form Surdas and the maidservant (Satyabhama).

78. In the next chapter will come the wonderful story of the *Vaishnava bhakta*, Sena the barber. Let all the God-loving, wise and pious *bhaktas* listen with love to his story. 79. The Life of the world is pleased with those who listen with love to the stories of the *bhaktas*. So Mahipati joining hands palm to palm pleads with the pious *bhaktas*.

80. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-third deeply delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Gopal Krishna.

CHAPTER XXXIV

SENA THE BARBER

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Radha and Krishna.

A MEAN CALLING DOES NOT HINDER DEVOTION

1. Sena the barber was a great saint. He was intensely devoted to the worship of Hari. His story pleases the ear. Listen with reverence, you pious people. 2. Knowing that the things of this world are perishable, in his unconcern Sena was indifferent to all earthly things. Day and night he devoted himself to the worship of Hari. 3. The idol of the beautiful dark complexioned One, the four-armed One, clad in yellow garment, was in his house, and was beautiful in its brilliancy. 4. Bathing early in the morning, he worshipped Vishnu first. Having completed his regular performances, he would turn to his occupation in his domestic affairs. 5. The occupation of a barber is considered low and lower than that is slavery. Because of his bad deeds in his former birth, Narayan gave him his birth in this caste. 6. A goldsmith is much lower than the astrologer of the town. They are born in these castes on account of deeds in their former births. 7. The watchmen of the town and the scribes are higher than are the outcastes. God gave them births as these for bad deeds in their previous births. 8. The town police punishes the Mangs and the fisherman, yet it is God Who gives them birth as such, because of their bad deeds in their former births. 9. Butchers and the like, and sellers of cloth, are always merciless, yet it is God who gives them these births for their bad deeds in their previous births. 10. Listening to the list of caste-duties, the hearers must not cherish any anger. In the *shastras* the blame is laid upon the doers of evil but the fault is not yours.

SUPPLICATION DESTROYS SINS

11. If you accept any of these occupations in life, any fault which occurs through you will be unwittingly so. Therefore, good people, in listening to this moral law, you need not feel any repentance of heart. 12. He who is born in any of these particular castes and does not worship Shri Hari, he may be said to have fallen into the whirlpool of this worldly existence and he can never be freed from it. 13. Knowing this to be true, Sena the barber went as a suppliant to Shri Hari and at once his faults were destroyed. 14. A streamlet of the town, as soon as it offers itself to the Ganges (it becomes Ganges itself); so in going as a suppliant to Shri Hari, all faults are destroyed; 15. just as by contact with the touchstone, iron at once becomes gold, so in going as a suppliant to Shri Hari, all faults are destroyed; 16. just as when many sticks of wood are put in the fire they assume one colour; in the same way if one surrenders to Shri Hari all his sins are destroyed. 17. Though born into any low caste, if with a repentant heart one goes as a suppliant to Hari, the Saviour of the world makes him as Himself.

THE KING'S RAGE AT SENA

18. On a certain day Sena the barber with reverence sat worshipping. Just then the officer of the king came and called him to come out at once. 19. His (Sena's) wife told him as he sat worshipping God, that the royal messenger was calling him. 20. He said in reply, 'Go and tell the officer that I am not at home.' The call was repeated four times. 21. To each one who came to call Sena, she said, 'Sena is not at home.' Some evil-minded neighbour saw in this lie an opportunity and he went and informed the king. 22. He said to the king, 'Sena is sitting worshipping God.' Hearing what this evil-minded person said, the king grew very angry. 23. To begin

with, the king was an evil Muhammadan and when he told of this fault in Sena, it was as if liquor had been given to a monkey and had in addition the bite of a scorpion. 24. Remember that an onion has a very disagreeable odour and if to that some garlick is added, the odour is worse than before; similarly evil-minded men are of the same species. 25. The king said to his officer, ' Bind Sena and bring him here. Fasten him into a bundle and throw him into the river. '

KRISHNA SERVES AS BARBER

26. Knowing what was the king's intention, Narayan the Advocate of His *bhaktas* took the form of Sena, and came to the door of the King's palace. 27. He who is the very first being, Narayan the Dweller on the sea of milk, Recliner upon Shesha, He, Shri Hari, bringing His bag of barber's instruments, came to the door of the king. 28. He whom Brahmadev and other gods and the *rishis* contempeate day and night, He, becoming Sena the barber, approached the king. 29. He whom *yogis* continually bring to their contemplation, sitting on the beds of spikes, He, seeing the distress in which Sena was, became a barber and went to the king. 30. He through whom the ten senses, the intellect and the mind all function, He the Pervader of the universe, the Cloud of intelligence, never gave consideration to His guise, whether it was high or low. 31. Krishna took off His crown, His earrings, His *Kaustubh* jewel, and taking on His shoulder the bag containing the barber's instruments, hurriedly started. 32. He for Whose knowledge they search the *Vedas* and the *Shastras* and humiliate themselves, He, Shripati, stood before the king and made him an obeisance. 33. The moment the king saw this form of a barber taken by Hari his anger at once disappeared. 34. Seating the king before him he shaved him, and then this clever Life of the world

shampooed his head. 35. The king said to him, 'You must remain here with me. Amongst all barbers I think you are the cleverest.' 36. 'But,' said the barber (incarnation of) the Life of the world, 'I pervaded the whole of the universe. There is no place empty of Me, no, not a single atom. 37. So it is not in My power to come and go, to do or to remain. Although I do, I am not a doer. Pervading all things, I am separate from all things. 38. In order to carry out this errand for my *bhakta*, I have for the moment taken this form with qualities. But I can never put aside My condition of being unmanifested.' 39. As the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Shri Krishna) said this, the king was made very happy, and to be rubbed over his body he ordered fragrant oil. 40. Placing a square seat made of sandalwood from the mountains of Maila he came and sat upon it, and Sena rubbed the oil upon him. 41. In the beautiful cup set with jewels there was the *Mogra* oil. In it was reflected the beautiful four-armed One in a visible form. 42. His glorious crown was shining with lustre. Clothed in His yellow robe He appeared in His complexion of a dark black cloud. When the king saw this form he was filled with amazement. 43. Turning his eyes upwards he saw Sena who was rubbing him, and turning to the cup he saw reflected in it the form of Krishna. 44. His eyes were fastened on this form. The king lost all consciousness of body. He did not realize that he should say that the rubbing might cease. 45. His ten organs of sense, his intellect and his mind all became inactive and were absorbed in this essential form of God. The men in the king's assembly laughed at the king and said, 'He has become possessed.' 46. His servants then said to him, 'You must get up now and go to your bath, it is now midday, waken yourself, O king.' 47. The king said to Sena, 'Sit a while beside me. If you go back to your house I will give up my life.' 48. Shri Hari replied to

him, 'I shall return quickly. O king, do not confine me in your heart.' 49. The king then brought a handful of golden coins, and placed them in the cloth of Sena the barber. 50. Hari went to Sena's house and putting his bag of barber's instruments on a peg, and throwing the golden coins into the bag, He became at once invisible.

THE KING'S UNEASINESS

51. The king after having performed his bath gave his command to his servants, 'You must at once go and invite Sena. 52. I do not need these things such as garments, ornaments and adornments; cause me to meet Sena the barber. 53. I do not care for dainty food, nor for fragrant powders, garments or fragrant flowers; invite Sena to come and cause me to meet him. 54. If he does not come at once, I shall lose my life. Cause me to meet at once that king of *bhaktas*. 55. The moment that I see him I shall be free from rebirths and deaths. Bring that *Vaishnava* Sena the barber and cause me to meet him.' 56. The king was entirely overcome and his servants were frightened. They then went to the house of Sena and requested him to come. 57. Sena replied, 'The king is angry with me.'

SENA AT THE PALACE

Still taking his bag of instruments on his shoulder he arrived at the door of the king. 58. The moment the king saw Sena he stood up to greet him and all the people of the king's assembly laughed to see this most extraordinary sight. 59. The king said to him, 'You were here early this morning and showed yourself in your essential form, being four-armed. 60. Show me the same form again.' So saying, he tightly embraced Sena's feet. Hearing the king say this, Sena the barber was full of astonishment. 61. Bringing the cup with the oil, the king made Sena look into it. There the four-armed One was not to be seen. He thought this a most wonderful miracle.

62. He exclaimed, ' Brother of the lowly, Purifier of the sinner, Dweller in *Vaikunth* (heaven), O Narayan, Delighter of the heart, for my sake Thou hast engaged Thyself in this lowly work. 63. Helper of the helpless, Husband of Rukmini, Father of cupid, beautiful with Thy dark complexion, Saviour of the world, generous Giver of the final deliverance, for my sake Thou didst perform this lowly work. 64. The *Vedas* and *Shastras* describe Thy good deeds, but they do not know the limit of Thy power. O merciful One, for my sake Thou didst accept this low occupation. 65. Brahma-dev, Indra and Shiva do not know of Thy limits. Why didst Thou today for my sake take a bag of barber's implements upon Thy shoulder ? ' 66. He then broke out into weeping and loud crying and was moved to great sobs. The king rushed up to Sena and held him by his feet.

ASSOCIATION WITH SAINTS

67. He said to him, ' By association with you, I have been able to see Krishna. How can I describe the power of association with the saints ? 68. It was by having met with Narad that the fisherman (Valmiki) wrote the *Ramayana*. Such is a *Vaishnava*, merciful and saviour of the dull and ignorant. 69. Through the favour of Vyas, Sanjaya had the privilege of listening to the *Bhagavadgita*. So through you I have had the sight of Shri Krishna. 70. Sena saw the coins which (God had thrown) into the bag of implements. He then distributed them among the Brahmans in the presence of every one. 71. The king became repentant and gave himself to the worship of Hari. Sena the barber was pleased, because Hari was pleased.

72. In the next chapter there will be the unusually interesting story about King Satvika at Jagannath. Listening to these stories wise men are made happy. 73. The Husband of Rukmini has caused me to compose

them according to His description. Mahipati beseeches his hearers to listen to them with love.

74. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-fourth very delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XXXV

KING SATVIK AND KARMABAI

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lifter of the Mountain Govardhan.

1. Listen now, you hearers, to a most extraordinary story. As one drinks the supreme nectar of the story of the *bhaktas* he will at once experience their value. Diseases of this earthly experience will immediately disappear.

SATVIK'S LEFT HAND

2. At Jagannath there was a King by name of Satvik. Nothing aside from God was pleasing to his heart. 3. This sacred city of Jagannath Vadaya is truly a heavenly city amongst mortals. There the Life of the world lives in the *avatarship* of Buddha and there He performs all His *lila* (voluntary deeds). 4. That king living by the Eastern sea was rightly called *Satvik* (truthful). The eagle-bannered One was always very favourable to him. 5. Three times a day at the time of worship the king came and seated himself at the temple. Receiving as his favour a *tulsi* leaf he afterwards would sit down to eat. 6. Garments, ornaments, adornments and daily food he offered to God. If uninvited guests should come, the king himself gave them food. 7. He kept a light burning night and day in the temple. He provided a place for free food and gave to those he thought were worthy. Food and water he gave to every creature. 8. Now it happened on a certain day that the king sat by the great door of the temple. In order to pass the time, he began to play some gambling game. 9. Laughingly he threw down the dice and had no consciousness of what he was doing. Just then at the great door of the temple a priest came to distribute favours. 10. In order to receive a favour the king put forward his left hand. The

priest felt that this was a very strange act. 11. Because he presented his left hand the priest went back again in the temple. When the king had finished his playing dice he asked the people regarding the favours which the priest had been distributing. 12. They replied, 'When he distributed them around you put out your left hand. Therefore the priest went back again into the temple.'

THE KING'S REPENTANCE

Hearing this the king was startled. 13. 'My former deeds were wrong I know. Later they have appeared in the form of a dice. Discarding nectar, I have drunk intoxicating liquor, so I think. 14. Or it is as if I had allowed the wish-tree to wither away and gave water to the *sindi* tree; in playing with dice the same thing happened to me, I think. 15. Just as if in picking up charcoal a treasure of money should be lost, so the same has happened to me, I think, in playing with the dice; 16. or as if someone should take a handful of ashes and the *kasturi* (musk) paste should disappear; I think the same has happened to me in playing with the dice. 17. Driving away the royal swan, I kept a crow; I cut down the sandalwood tree, and planted a *hingan*; so I think the same has happened to me while playing with the dice. 18. Or just as when a Brahman gets up and goes away when he sees a Mang; so it had happened to me in playing with the dice.' 19. The king was very repentant and did not go again into the temple. As one who listens surreptitiously to the service, the king sat quietly at the door of the temple.

THE CULPRIT PUNISHED

20. He said, 'My hand has committed a great wrong and I must punish it.' Saying this he devised a plan. 21. He called his minister, and told him his thought. 'When sleeping at night in my palace I am visited by a

ghost; 22. he puts his hand in through the window and I become greatly frightened; so you remain by my bed and cut off his hand.' 23. The minister replied, 'Your wish is my command. When the ghost appears I will cut off his hand.' He then took a sharp instrument and at night he sat hiding himself. 24. The lights were burning in the palace and the minister remained awake, waiting for the ghost. He proposed as soon as the ghost appeared that he would cut off his hand. 25. At that moment the king put out *his own* hand through a window and the minister took his instrument and immediately cut off the hand. 26. The moment the hand fell down the minister recognized it. He was overwhelmed with sobs and threw himself down upon the ground. 27. He mourned aloud. Just then the king came inside and said, 'My hand was my enemy, therefore I had it cut off. 28. Let your mind be at rest.' He then placed his hand in a palanquin, and sent it by the hand of messengers to the great door of the temple. 29. The king said to them, 'Go now to the great door of the temple and say to Jagannath, "Thou, O Husband of Rukmini, listen to the list of my many transgressions. 30. With an evil heart I played with dice, therefore I did not receive Thy favour; that which has transgressed Thy command I have sent to Thee in the form of my hand. 31. I find that among my organs of action my hand was the transgressor. I have therefore punished it, and sent it to Thee. 32. It may have killed some and they were innocent. It may have stolen some time from Thee. Therefore I immediately punished my hand and have sent it to Thee. 33. Intoxicated with pride, it may have hunted in the forest. That transgressor I send to Thee. 34. It had not worshipped Thee. It has been a great killer, an evil-doer and evil-minded. O Being of goodness, Thou knowest how great an evildoer it is. 35. It has not served the saints. It has not worshipped Thee, O Keshav. So I have sent this evil hand to Thee.'

36. O Jagannath, punish it as it may seem right to Thee.”

THE WRONGDOER BEFORE GOD FOR DECISION

Giving this message to the messengers he sent them to the door of the temple. 37. They took the hand to the great door of the temple and told God in reference to it. There were cries of ‘ Victory, Victory ’, and the *Vaishnavas* showered upon it flowers and fragrant powder. 38. They exclaimed, ‘ Blessed is the king. Although engaged in domestic affairs he is indifferent to all worldly things. Putting the responsibility upon God he cut off his own hand. 39. Innumerable men and women receive their perishable bodies, but they do not complete the full purpose of life, because not holding in their hearts the Husband of Janaki (Rama). 40. Many men wander from country to country in order to gain their livelihood. They spend their lives in all kinds of ways but they do not die worshipping God. 41. The moment they are afflicted with a nine days’ fever, they go through fourteen different fasts; but these unfortunate ones do not perform good deeds in this world by observing the *ekadashi* (eleventh day of the fortnight). 42. Even those friends quarrel if in their business a shell’s worth is lost; but the shameless ones who have no good in them from their former births do not sing of the good qualities of Hari. 43. If robbers rob them of their wealth they wring their hands, and take no action; but the evil-minded do not make their lives at all valuable by spending their wealth on those who are worthy of it. 44. Such is the condition seen in the practices of this *Kali Yuga*. Many are desirous of these illusory things, but we know that King Satvik is a man of great devotion. ’ 45. Thus spoke the *Vaishnava* saints to one another. Suddenly an extraordinary thing took place. Let good people listen to it with love.

46. The hand which the king had cut off turned suddenly into a *davana* plant. It was taken at once and planted in a garden. 47. Priests then in their love brought the favours of Hari. The king had lost all concern for his body and he put out just the stump of the hand he had cut off. 48. But as soon as he put it out, it became just as it was before. The *bhaktas* therefore shouted, 'Victory, Victory,' and were greatly astonished.

THE STORY OF KARMABAI

49. Again listen, you pious people, to the recital of a most delightful story. The moment you listen to it the three kinds of affliction and all doubts will be destroyed. 50. Because Bhagwan is in the city of Jagannath in the form of Buddha, His *bhaktas* continually live there as it is a great sacred city. 51. There was a Brahman woman by name of Karmabai whose mind was ever at the feet of Hari. While she was with child her husband died. 52. She mourned bitterly. She was in great distress and at the end of nine months a son was born to her. 53. She exclaimed, 'O God Supreme, Jagannath, let this *bhakta* of Thine live.' The son grew from day to day. Then she had him married. 54. When his wife became with child Karmabai was greatly pleased. Just when her grandson was born, however, her son died. 55. She mourned for him day and night, but she controlled her mind and said, 'If this child but lives he will be of use to me.' 56. Karmabai took special care of him day and night. She never neglected her grandson even when she was sitting or when she was lying down or when she was eating. 57. Many days passed in this way, but the god of death took away the child, and Karmabai's heart felt no peace anywhere. 58. Mourning day and night she would exclaim, 'O merciful One, Shri Hari, why hast Thou placed me in this sad world?'

KARMABAI AND THE SAINTS

59. Just then some *sadhus* and saints who were on a pilgrimage to Jagannath arrived and took lodgings in the house of Karmabai. 60. Seeing her mental distress, they asked her for the reason of it and Karmabai told them just what had happened. 61. The *Vaishnavas* said to her, 'This world is of a sorrowful nature. Know for certain that there is not the least happiness here. 62. If one should sleep upon a bed infested with bugs, then it would only be as in a dream that he could see any happiness in this world. 63. If one is distressed with thirst, then he can only find happiness in this world by the satisfaction derived from seeing in a mirage floods of water. 64. If one can live after ending life by drinking poison, only then can he find the happiness dreamed of in this world. 65. If a reader of *Puranas* can receive happiness by explaining *Puranic* stories to a deaf man, then only as in a dream can he find everlasting happiness in this world. 66. So now, Karmabai, give attention. All worldly things are perishable.' As the *Vaishnava bhaktas* said this, her heart melted. 67. Karmabai exclaimed to those *sadhus* and saints, 'I will do as you tell me.' They said to her, 'Day and night you must worship Jagannath.' 68. The *sadhus* preach according to one's worth. They have come as *avatars* into this mortal world in order to save sinners. 69. They have come into this mortal world as *avatars* in order to help men to listen to the praise of the good qualities of Shri Hari, and to give to them the happiness of love. 70. It is to teach knowledge to the ignorant and the dull-minded. They have come into this mortal world to sweep away the pride of evil men. 71. Lest the path of *bhakti* should become fouled and all men sink into worldly things, therefore *Vaishnavas* in the *Kali Yuga* have descended as *avatars* to this mortal world.

BEREAVED KARMABAI FONDLES GOPAL'S IMAGE

72. Well, Karmabai devoted herself to the feet of the saints. They took out of their things an image of Gopal and gave it to her. 73. The *Vaishnavas* said to her, 'Continue to worship it. Give to it the same love that you had given to your son.' 74. Saying this the *sadhus* went to live at the sacred bathing-places. and Karmabai's heart felt great joy. 75. Just as she used to play with her grandson, so now she acted crazily over the idol. The moment she saw it she would take away from it the effect of an evil eye and caress it in her love. 76. She would take warm water and bathe the idol as she used to do with her little child on her feet. Then placing the god in a cradle, with love she would swing it. 77. In her love she used to dress it in garments and adornments. Nothing else pleased her aside from the idol of Krishna. 78. Placing buttermilk and rice in a plate, she would present it to this image of Gopal and tell it stories. She would exclaim, 'Eat this, eat this, O Lord of the world; You are hungry.' 79. Seeing her feelings of devotion, Hari began to eat at her house. Just then a Brahman who had maintained a perpetual fire came to lodge there. 80. She had arisen early one morning and was feeding the god. The Brahman asked her in reference to it and she told him her story. 81. The Brahman said to her, 'Listen to my words, Karmabai, give attention. Perform your bath and then worship Shri Krishna. 82. If you make your food offerings to God with unclean clothes, He will not pay respect to them.' Hearing what he said, she replied, 'I will do as you say.' 83. The next morning arising early she cleaned the floor and the yard, and then she brought holy water and prepared to cook. 84. In performing her domestic affairs she was delayed and therefore Jagannath became hungry.

KRISHNA BEYOND EARTHLY RULES

Privately He went into the dream of the priest and told him what had happened. 85. 'At the house of Karmabai, a very orthodox Brahman was staying. He placed a doubt in her mind, and then hastened on his way. 86. He advised her to observe a very strict cleanliness and the offering of food is therefore delayed. Go to her at once and inform her. 87. The *Paramatma* (Supreme Spirit), the Pure Intelligence, One beyond all illusions, the *Atmaram* (Divine Soul) is never harmed by any bondage to religious deeds. 88. Although a Doer, He is still a Non-doer, and yet Witnesser of the hearts, of all creatures. He Who for the sake of His *bhaktas* has become an *avatar* can never be harmed by any bondage to religious deeds. 89. The Pervader of the universe, the Life of the world, in preaching knowledge of divine things, can never be harmed by any bondage to religious rites.' 90. The priest went and gave the information to Karmabai. She then brought the offering, and Hari in the presence of all ate from her hand. 91. Cries of 'Victory, Victory' followed the clapping of hands. All the assembly of *bhaktas* rejoiced. All the holy Brahmanas were astonished. 92. They exclaimed, 'Where the sacrifices and *yoga* practices are, there Shri Hari does not come, but He is eating here from the hand of Karmabai. This indeed is a novel sight. 93. He Whom Brahmadev and other gods and Shiva continually contemplate in their hearts, He eats from the hand of Karmabai. This is novel indeed. 94. He Whom the various forms of *yoga* and various opinions continually search for, He eats from the hand of Karmabai. It is novel indeed.' 95. One said, 'Even Brahmadev is unable to describe the power of a *bhakta*.' All the people then worshipped the feet of Karmabai. 96. Even today at the sacred place of Jagannath, the god Jagannath gives the evidence of this. After the food of Karmabai arrives, then the offerings are presented.

97. In the next chapter there is the delightful story of the *bhakta*, Janajaswant. Mahipati says, 'Let all good people in love give their attention.'

98. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhakta-vijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-fifth deeply delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVI

JANAJASWANT AND SURDAS MADANMOHAN

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Gopal Krishna.

I. JANAJASWANT THE MERCHANT SAINT

1. This is an auspicious day. The wise, God-loving hearers who have assembled here, having had all desires fulfilled, are here where the delightful stories are being related. 2. The merchant Janajaswant was a great *bhakta*, devoted to the worship of Rama. Listen, you wise and pious hearers, to his exceedingly delightful story. 3. He had five sons. He was a millionaire. His house was filled with every form of wealth. Still day and night he worshipped Shri Rama with love. 4. If uninvited guests appeared he gave them food. He gave respect to all *sadhus*. Those who asked alms of him were made happy. He sent no one away empty-handed. 5. His desire to give away money for charitable objects was great.

In the meantime his sons grew up but they were miserable evildoers. They turned away from the worship of Hari. 6. Just as the hater of Vishnu, Ravana, was born in the family of Pulastya, or as Duryodhan who was in the family line of the moon was a man with exceedingly many faults, 7. so from Janajaswant these *non-bhaktas* and evildoers were born. They did not know what right or wrong was. They were wicked rascals, most contemptible. 8. They had no love for giving charity. They would exclaim, 'The old man is crazy, what shall we do with him?' Such was their constant thought. 9. All men come to befriend one in prosperity, but finally they abandon him. Therefore one should always have a wakeful mind. 10. While the tongue is active, one should be relating the good deeds of Shri Hari.

While one possesses hands, one should worship Vishnu with devotion. 11. While one has feet he should without any shame dance whenever Hari's good deeds are described. While one has ears he should listen with fondness to the stories of the saints. 12. While one is in good health he should constantly go on pilgrimage; and while one has eyes he should look with love on the Husband of Rukmini.

JANAJASWANT'S SONS AND THE KING
CONSPIRE AGAINST HIM

13. Janajaswant was alive to his duties to all men, but his sons and his wife did not like his deeds of charity. 14. They exclaimed, 'He is our enemy. He has ruined our business.' So they stole some of his money and hid it away. 15. Evil men do not like good men. Thieves do not like the moon to shine. An adulteress becomes irritated if she hears a faithful wife praised. 16. When the sun rises, owls think the time to die has come. Seeing a wise *pandit* fools are unhappy. 17. Seeing *sadhus*, revilers become supremely displeased. A man of physical weakness has no liking for a powerful and courageous man. 18. Seeing a Brahman devoted to good deeds, the wicked become very much disgusted. And so the wicked sons of Janajaswant raged in many ways against their father. 19. Therefore they said, 'Let us go to the door of the king, and tell him our complaint.'

PARRICIDAL SONS

They decided that they would kill their father. 20. The four men went to the king's door and told him their complaint. They said, 'Our father is a complete fool. He scatters his money according to his own wish. 21. While we possess money we consider it as yours, O king. Should you fall into any distress, it would certainly be of use to you. 22. So call him and punish him, O king.' Listening to the evil thoughts of these wicked persons the

low-minded king became angry. 23. That exceedingly thoughtless king, having listened to their words and without giving the matter any further thought, sent word to Janajaswant to come to him.

PLACES FIT TO BE AVOIDED

24. Where a king is thoughtless, and his ministers wicked, where the water of a river is not seen, and where pious God-loving men do not live, one should immediately leave such a place. 25. The place where there are no good people and *sadhus* and where there is no praise of Hari, where there is no thought about the soul, where there is no listening to the *Puranas*, one should leave such a place. 26. Where there is no love for good deeds, where the king pays no attention to justice and morals, where unrighteous customs are prevalent, one should not seat himself in any company at such a place. 27. Where there are neither rich men, nor gardens, and where men are thoughtless, good men should not remain there a single moment.

JANAJASWANT TO BE DROWNED

28. The king said to Janajaswant, 'Why are you so obstinate? You distribute your money to beggars without the knowledge of your sons.' 29. Janajaswant gave reply, 'That is my nature to be obstinate. With love for the worship of Shri Rama, I pay respect to *sadhus* and saints.' 30. Hearing him say this the king became full of rage; just as when a parrot speaks from within his cage, a falcon becomes angry. 31. Then the evil-minded king said to the sons of Janajaswant, 'With your consent I will kill your father.' 32. The sons then said, 'He is not our father; he is our enemy. Fasten him in a bundle, and throw him into the water.' 33. Janajaswant was then fastened in a bundle with stones in it and thrown into a pond in front full of water.

GOD SAVES JANAJASWANT

34. As soon as the Husband of Janaki (Rama) saw this He appeared for the sake of His *bhakta*. The Husband of Ramā took the form of a tortoise and held him on its back. 35. Janajaswant said to the king, 'The Lord of the heart is protecting me, just as He upholds the heaven without a pillar. 36. He who gives light to the sun and the moon, and by Whose light they revolve, He, the Pervader of the universe and the Lord of the world, protects His *bhaktas*. 37. During the *avatarship* of Rama, He made the stones float on the water. That Life of Janaki, the Son of Raghu, is my Protector. 38. In the form of a tortoise He has lifted Janajaswant up and is holding me in the air. Come and see this for yourself.'

THE KING'S PENITENCE

39. Hearing these words the king became repentant. He leaped into the water and drew Janajaswant out. 40. He untied the bundle with his own hands. He grasped the feet of Janajaswant and exclaimed, 'I have done wrong. Forgive me, O king of *bhaktas*.' 41. Having punished the sons he told them to go as suppliants to their father. They also accepted the command and prostrated themselves before him. 42. Having abandoned all evil thoughts, with reverence they worshipped their father. Seeing the miracle in the case of their father, God's *bhakta*, they now devoted themselves to the worship of Shri Rama.

II. SURDAS MADANMOHAN

SURDAS AS ROYAL OFFICIAL

43. Hearers, listen to another story. The story of Surdas Madanmohan is an extremely purifying one. Listen to this delightful story with its deep meaning. 44. King Akbar was ruling in Hastinapur (Delhi), and Surdas was an official under him. The king soon appointed

him to be an official in the district of Mathura. 45. It was here at Mathura, Gokul and Vrindavan, ancient sacred cities, that Shri Krishna, becoming an *avatar*, manifested all His *lila* (voluntary deeds). 46. Therefore many *Vaishnava bhaktas*, holy men, and many *Vairagis* (ascetics) live here. Although engaged in worldly affairs they are indifferent to worldly things and devote themselves to worship. 47. When giving garments and food to *Vaishnavas*, the Life of the world feels that He Himself has been supplied. Just as when the wishes of one about to be a mother are carried out, the child to be born feels satisfied; 48. and as a father rejoices, when he hears of the success of his son; so Krishna feels the same happiness when anyone reverences his *bhaktas*; 49. or as when water is lovingly given to the roots of a tree, all the branches are refreshed; so the Lord of Vaikunth rejoices when His *bhaktas* are revered in love, 50. or as a mother feels great pride when she adorns her infant child with ornament; so Krishna rejoices at the constant reverence for *Vaishnavas*. 51. With this idea in his mind Surdas began to serve the *Vaishnavas*; he used to prepare dainty foods and lovingly feed the saints. 52. He used to fill carts with sweetmeats and milk-cakes, and send them to the saints. 53. In thus spending his money for worthy objects the Husband of Rukmini was greatly pleased. He said to Himself, 'Although Surdas is engaged in worldly business, still he lovingly worships My *bhaktas*.'

SURDAS SPENDS ALL MONEY IN CHARITY

54. Possessing this feeling towards the *Vaishnavas* he spent on them all the money he possessed. That threw the mind of Surdas into an ocean of anxiety. 55. He exclaimed, 'Now my own money has been spent. And my service of the saints will fall short. And if I do not provide dainty food for the *Vaishnavas*, then what is the use of my living this earthly life?' 56. Then he thought to himself, 'I am in

charge of the king's revenue. I can spend that with a solemn purpose and feed the saints. 57. Although the king may become angry with me, he may even put me to death, still this earthly life of mine will have served its purpose.' He therefore decided definitely to do so. 58. For He said, 'Although I should give away my life, it would be in the service of *Vaishnavas*, and it would at once remove the terribly hard diseases of this earthly life.' 59. Thus thinking he broke into the treasury containing the money of the King. He had the noble idea of at once being of service to the *Vaishnavas*. 60. He had all kinds of dainty food prepared and began to feed the saints. He supplied the needs of the saints in Mathura, Gokul and Vrindavan. 61. After making an offering to God of garments and ornaments, he gave them to the saints. He built many free lodging-houses and gave them to all. 62. Thus he gave away more than eight million and ten thousand rupees on this occasion.

ACCUSED OF MISAPPROPRIATION

His assistant was an evil man and seeing what Surdas did he became very angry. 63. He went to Hastinapur and told the facts to the king. He said, 'You have appointed Surdas Madanmohan over the district of Mathura. 64. He has spent all your money in a wrong way.' When King Akbar heard this he became very angry; 65. just as when melted butter falls into a sacrificial fire, the ignorant say it has been wasted in vain; or as when one gives water to the *tulsi* plant, fools think of it as a waste; 66. or as when one has given food to one who asks for it, misers feel as though they had been robbed; or when *yogis* wander from bathing place to bathing place, those who live for enjoyment regard it as a crazy act; 67. or when Brahmins continually read the *Pavaman* [in the *Rig Veda*], the Muhammadans think that they are merely babbling; or when one lovingly reverences

the saints, revilers think it a foolish thing to do; 68, so when Surdas spent money for the *Vaishnavas*, his evil-minded assistant thought that it was spent in vain. So when the king was told of what Surdas had done, his heart was convulsed with anger.

SUMMONED BEFORE THE KING

69. The king then sent his officers to go and call Surdas. He said to them, 'Tell Surdas to bring here at once all the money belonging to the district of Mathura.' 70. Having written such a letter he sent it by the hands of his messengers. He said to them, 'You must ask of him eight million and ten thousand rupees.' 71. The messengers of the king suddenly appeared at the house of Surdas. They surrounded his house and spoke with great anger. 72. They said, 'Two years have now passed, yet you have not given account. Akbar is therefore angry, and has called you to his presence. 73. Take all the money that has been entrusted to you from the district in your charge. If you do not bring all the money, we shall bind you and take you in accordance with the king's command.' 74. Surdas said in reply, 'The king has become angry needlessly. Out of the money I have purchased priceless jewels. 75. I think if these jewels are shown to the king, he will be satisfied. When an expert examines their value it will come to twice the value of the money.'

SURDAS' LETTER TO AKBAR

76. Saying this to them, Surdas went into his private apartment and by the hand of his wife brought out two boxes. 77. He filled them with crystals and wrote a letter to the king. He said, 'It is true, O king, that I have spent all the money for *sadhus* and saints. 78. I have spent in worthy objects more than eight million and ten thousand rupees, and Surdas absconded at midnight.' Such were the contents of the letter. 79. He put the letter

into one of the boxes and carefully locked them and placed his stamp upon them with his name. 80. He brought out the boxes and gave them to the messengers of the king who were sitting at the door. He said to them, 'I have purchased priceless things and kept them in my house. 81. It was already in my mind to come at once to see the king.' Hearing Surdas say this, the messengers were pleased. 82. They said, 'You are a wise man, and exceedingly alert for the work of your master. This being so, the king has certainly become angry with you needlessly.' 83. Surdas had dainty food of various kinds prepared and fed these messengers. He gave garments and ornaments to all and made them delighted. 84. He caused them to lie down and sleep and then at midnight he ran away and went into the jungle, lovingly to worship God.

SURDAS AS VAGABOND

85. When the whole night had passed and the sun arose, the messengers of the king arose and looked for Surdas. 86. They did not find him in his house. They hunted for him in the town with great earnestness and they hunted for him in the region around the town and in the jungle. 87. They said to themselves, 'From fear of the king, Surdas must have run away and is wandering to sacred bathing-places. When the king hears of this he will punish us.' 88. Having this fear in their minds, they sought ways of comforting themselves. They said, 'Surdas filled these two boxes with jewels and has placed them with us. 89. When we show these boxes to the king, he will never be angry with us.' Saying this they started on their way to Hastinapur (Delhi). 90. They told Akbar their story and taking out the boxes they gave them to the king. 91. They said to him, 'Listen to our words, O king. Surdas is a supremely clever man. He had already put aside priceless jewels in his house. 92. But believing the complaint of

the evil-minded assistant, you hastened in your demand of money. He was free of any fear and intended to come and see you. 93. But when we went and sat close to the door fear arose in his mind. After showing us the jewel-box he finally ran away.' 94. Hearing these words of the messengers, Akbar became much astonished. Then calling his minister Birbal, he told him all the news. 95. He took the boxes and unlocking them looked inside. He looked for jewels but found merely crystals. The messengers then began to tremble violently from fear. 96. Just then they discovered inside it the letter. As it was read, all the people listened. The king with respect and with love listened to it. 97. He said, 'Surdas has spent the sum of eight million and ten thousand rupees for *sadhus* and saints. But feeling fear in his mind at midnight he ran away.'

THE BACKBITER PUNISHED

98. As the king read the letter he was very much astonished. He called the slanderer to him and said, 'You have spoken an untruth. 99. Surdas has spent this money in worthy causes. You told us that he had wasted it. I see now that you are a hater of *Vaishnavas*. I must punish you.' 100. After punishing him, Akbar read the letter. He recognized the handwriting of Surdas. 101. Tears filled his eyes. He spoke kindly of Surdas to his ministers: 'Although I were to hunt through the three worlds, I should not find a servant as faithful as Surdas. 102. Though I have been intoxicated by my royal position, he has caused me to seek for the supreme spiritual riches. So give him an assurance not to be afraid, and go and bring him here. 103. Send letters from district to district to bring Surdas here quickly.' Hearing this command of the king every one felt great joy. 104. They sent letters to the officials in the Western districts immediately saying that if they should see Surdas they should send him at

once to meet the king, 105. 'Fearing me, he has started to wander with penitence to sacred bathing-places. If any-one should suddenly see him, give him an assurance not to fear and send him here.'

RETURN OF SURDAS

106. The writing and sending of letters spread the news from district to district. Surdas was at that time at Mathura and there heard of the king's order. 107. He was astonished. He said, 'Mercy has arisen in the mind of the king. I do not understand the doings of God, the merciful Shri Krishna. 108. The Pervader of the universe, Shri Hari, is in the hearts of every one. It is through this mercy that the king is now pleased in his heart.' 109. With his mind comforted, he went at once to Hastinapur (Delhi). The moment he was in the presence of the king he received great honour. 110. King Akbar arose and gave Surdas an embrace. He said to him, ' If I should hunt through all the three worlds, I could not find a servant such as you. 111. I did not know that you had spent my money in such worthy objects. I persecuted you because of the report of the evil-minded one. 112. Now be free from fear and continue with your former authority.' The King having said this to him, Surdas replied, 113. ' Listen, O king. I have put aside all desires for earthly things. Why put me again into the snare of these worldly things ?' 114. Akbar replied, ' I see that you have become *virakta* (a *Vairagi*, one indifferent to earthly things.). You have cast aside all illusory thoughts. 115. Still carry on your former authority and spend the money for the saints. I see no one, apart from you, wise enough to be of service to the *Vaishnavas*. 116. On your own authority spend eight million and ten thousand rupees and feed the *Vaishnava bhaktas* in the sacred district of Mathura. 117. Feeling

repentant in your heart, you decided to abandon the service of the king. But according to my command, receive my authority to be of service to the saints.' 118. Listening to these humble words of the king, Surdas thought over the matter in his heart. 'If I can attain the supreme spiritual riches while still engaged in worldly things, I should not turn away from doing so.' 119. Then he said to the king, 'Your command is my authority. Give me the work of serving the saints.' King Akbar honouring him gave him a written permission. 120. Surdas Madan-mohan then returned to the sacred city of Mathura and there gave many forms of delicious food to the saints. 121. Formerly he feared that the king would be angry with him, but by Shri Hari's favour, that fear was no more there. His joy could not be contained in his heart. 122. Holding his love for the service of the saints, he brought often into his imagination the idol of Krishna. Day and night he would repeat God's name and lovingly describe His good deeds. 123. He composed and sang with his own lips many songs. By these Surdas pleaded with the Husband of Rukmini, with feelings of great reverence for Him.

WORDS WITHOUT ACTIONS WORTHLESS

124. One day when performing a *kirtan*, he was praising the saints and in the joy of love composed a poem. Listen what he said. 125. 'Surdas is the holder of the shoes of the saints. It is so written in the *abhangs*.' Hearing him say this the noble *Vaishnavas* felt great surprise. 126. One said, 'It is an untrue statement which Surdas has written in his poetic composition, for if it is not seen by men in his actions, then what is the good of his describing it in words? 127. If a cloud does not rain down upon the earth, then the sky-thunder is in vain. When there is no life in the body, it is the Lingayats who

adorn the corpse. 128. As if one should sit in the *bazaar* to sell musk which has no fragrance; so of what use is poetic ability without action? 129. Putting on different disguises an actor acts, but because his action is not real, his colour does not remain. 130. If one has made a picture of the sun, he cannot give it light. So this poetic composition of Surdas' seems to us.' 131. The three kinds of people variously put blame upon him. Some were pious and wise and they were well satisfied. 132. Those given to talk and of curious minds said, 'This poetry is merely modern. His composition is useless as it is not realized in his action. 133. Even if a coin is new, a fool rejects it. So without good reason some blame modern poetry. 134. After many days have passed, however, people will accept it. *Maya* has given a wrong idea to men. 135. Last season was a good one for crops, but this season is one of famine. A dead man is fortunate.' These are common sayings. 136. When a wise man is before them, the ignorant call him a fool. After he has died, they loudly praise him. 137. First there is a mistake, and then the remembrance of it. That is the custom of man. But wise men understand it from experience.

SURDAS PASSES HIS TEST

138. Well, it is needless to speak any more of this. God's *Maya* is irresistible and puts men into the snare of wrong ideas, or sinks them into the mire of doubt. 139. The *bhakta* and noble *Vaishnava* Surdas continued constantly in the service of the saints. Those who reviled his poetry did so without proper thought. 140. They said, 'He possesses no action, and he is speaking in a hypocritical way.' As Surdas was going one day to see and worship God, a *bairagi* (ascetic) approached him. 141. He said to himself, 'I want to test Surdas and see how his poetic statement is true.' So thinking to himself he spoke to Surdas.

Listen to what he said. 142. He said to Surdas, 'I am hurrying to see and worship at the temple. Keep my shoes in your hand and for the moment take good care of them.' 143. Hearing what the *bairagi* said, Surdas was quite pleased. He said, 'For many days that was the purpose which I was holding in my mind. 144. That longing in my heart has come to good fruitage. I have lost my mental perplexities.' He then descended at once from his palanquin. 145. He asked the man for the shoes, and took them in his hand. He then stood by the great door of the temple and folding the shoes in his garment held them close to his heart in his love. 146. Giving command to his servants he sent the palanquin home. Seeing the devotion of Surdas, the *bairagi* was astonished. 147. Then hastening to the great door of the temple, he thought to himself, 'I will delay here and I shall then have a good chance to see whether Surdas' mind will be troubled thereby.' 148. So going into the assembly hall he then sat down singing the praise of Hari, remaining there from early morning till the setting of the sun. 149. After two hours of the night had passed the *bairagi* came outside to look for Surdas. There Surdas stood holding his shoes.

KRISHNA'S MANIFESTATION TO SURDAS

150. Seeing the *bairagi*, Surdas was greatly pleased. Then springing forward he took the shoes and held them close to his feet. 151. He placed his hand on Surdas' head and said, 'You are a devoted noble *Vaishnava*. In order to test your mind, I made this long delay. 152. You speak of yourself as a servant of the saints. And you do as you say. Coming here with this idea in my mind I have tested you. 153. In calling yourself the holder of the shoes of the saints you have spoken the truth.' Hearing him say this the heart of Surdas melted. 154. Then feeling repentance in his mind he had himself robbed of all he possessed, and free from all things he then gave himself up to

the worship of God with love. 155. He gave great service to the saints and thereby the Husband of Rukmini was pleased, so that He gave to Surdas a visible manifestation of Himself.

156. In these stories are described one greater than the other supremely pious *Vaishnava bhaktas*. In the next chapter there is a most delightful and unusual story, which if listened to will give happiness to the hearers. 157. The Husband of Rukmini, Dweller upon the banks of the Bhima, is causing me to relate the stories in the form of this book. It is by His favour that Mahipati is relating them to the hearers.

158. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-sixth very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XXXVII

RASIK MURAR

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Loved One of Rukmini.

GOD'S ASSISTANCE IN WRITING THESE STORIES

1. O Husband of Rukmini, Dweller on the banks of the Bhima, Thou art the Enlightener of the heart. Aside from Thee, O infinite One, there is no other relator, nor any other one to cause these stories to be written. 2. Just as it is the roots that cause the tree to live; or as it is water that is necessary to ripen the grain; so do Thou, O Krishna, cause me to write these most delightful stories. 3. The sea is the refuge of the animals and the sky is the refuge of stars; so Thou, O Ocean of mercy, art the Enlightener of my intensely dull mind. 4. As the holder of the strings causes the dolls to dance in the presence of the crowd, so entering into the temple of my heart Thou art enabling me to describe the noble stories of Thy *bhaktas*. 5. Instead of describing Thy good qualities, to compose extensive poetry is to weary the tongue for nothing, so it appears to me. 6. Therefore, O Krishna, I pray Thee again and again to confer on me a loving gift to compose this book.

A SHIRKER DETECTED

7. In the previous chapter there was the description of the *bhakta* Surdas Madanmohan, whose story all of you have listened to with its deep meaning. 8. And now hear the story of the great *bhakta* Rasik Murar, who was exceedingly alert in the service of the saints. He continually lived in the district of Mathura in the town of Saya. 9. He was accustomed to bathe in the Jumna and then worship Shri Krishna. He used the sixteen materials for worship and offered God flowers and *tulsi* leaves. 10. Then calling the *Vaishnavas* together he would wash their feet

with his own hands. Drinking the water in which their feet were washed he then worshipped the saints. 11. Preparing many kinds of dainty food he used to feed the saints. In his love he regarded these saints as the same as Vishnu. 12. This brought him a great many disciples who helped him. Sitting quietly by himself he lovingly worshipped God. 13. It happened on a certain day that *Vaishnavas* came to his house. He gave to everyone a grass mat to sit upon. 14. He then said to one of his disciples, 'Worship the saints and bring the sacred water at once with which their feet are washed and give it to me.' 15. When this command was given, the worship of the saints began. With laziness and wrong thoughts, one immediately began to wash their feet. 16. There was there a Brahman, a foul smelling leper. His feet were covered with sores and intensely filthy. His clothes were torn and exceedingly old and he was dressed filthily. 17. Looking at him the disciple felt disgust. He said to himself, 'If I should wash his feet, it will make me vomit.' 18. So he washed with love the feet of those who were wise and clean. And having worshipped the saints according to custom, he waved lights over them. 19. Collecting the water in which the feet of the saints were washed he gave it to the *sadguru*. Murar immediately drank it.

SECRET OF THE HOLY WATER

20. He called all his company of disciples together and told them the secret of his heart. He said, 'I drank the water today in which the feet of the saints were washed, but it did not taste properly. 21. I think the sacred water was brought to me with a doubt in the mind. I understand this from my very feeling.' Then he added, 22. 'Now you all think over the matter and tell me why it is that this nectar water in which their feet were washed tasted so unpleasant.' 23. Hearing what their *sadguru* said they all gave

themselves to thinking. He who had been engaged in the worship of the saints was much astonished by that question. 24. Then coming before Murar, he stood still, joined his hands together, and told him all that had happened. 25. He said, 'Listen O *Swami*, to my true words. I was worshipping the saints, and seeing there a filthy Brahman leper I felt disgust. 26. I felt a great sense of repugnance. Then excepting him I worshipped all the other noble *Vaishnavas* and hastened back, O *Swami*. ' 27. Murar *Swami* then went up to the Brahman leper, and made him a prostrate *namaskar* on the ground and washed his feet with his own hands, 28. wiped his feet also with his own hands and held them lovingly to his heart. He pressed the toe of his foot to his eyes and drank with pleasure the water in which his feet were washed. 29. Then he exclaimed, 'Now the water in which his feet were washed tastes good.' Hearing this all the *Vaishnavas* wondered and said, 'No one can understand the reverential feelings of Murar *Swami*. 30. Such is the power of a *guru's* favour. Only a good disciple understands its secrets. Just as the *chakor* bird only fully knows the nectar of the moon; 31. or as the faithful wife alone understands the mind of her husband; or as only one indifferent to worldly things can indentify himself with the experience of the God-loving *bhaktas* while listening to their stories; 32. or as it is the bee alone that has experience of the sweet taste of the lotus-flower; or as it was Vishvamitra who alone understood the extraordinary power of the *gayatri-mantra*; 33. or as it is the Lord of Kailas (Shiva) alone who has the deep experience of the name of Shri Ram; or as it is the *bhaktas* of Vishnu who realize the extraordinary power of the religious teachings of the *Bhagwat*; 34. thus it was that the sweet taste of the water in which the saints' feet were washed was realized by Murar *Swami*. Nothing equal to it in sweetness could he find anywhere.'

35. Saying this, the *Vaishnava bhaktas* placed their hands of blessing on his head. They said to him, 'The Lord Krishna will be your helper because of your devotion.' 36. Because Murar felt this reverence for the feet of the saints he understood the sweetness of the water in which their feet were washed and from that time they gave him the name of Rasik Murar.

DAYARNAVA'S VILLAGES CONFISCATED

37. Murar's *guru* was Dayarnava. He was an exceedingly learned man in divine knowledge. He very lovingly and according to the prescribed rules worshipped God. 38. With the sixteen materials needed in worship he used to worship the beautiful idol (*Shaligram*) made from the *gandaki* stone, and in his reverence used to have it clothed in raiments, ornaments and adornments. 39. There was a king who came to the same temple to see and worship God. With great pleasure he noticed the worship of Dayarnava, and then gave him the written deeds for the revenue of four villages. 40. The king said to Dayarnava, 'These villages have been given to you for the sake of helping you in your worship. Let all the revenue from these villages be used for the worship of *sadhus* and saints.' 41. Saying this the king returned to his city and Dayarnava was greatly surprised. 42. He said to himself, 'Shri Krishna has supplied me with all the means I have wished for.' He was very happy over it, and continued his worship of Hari.

43. These rites lasted for many days, but suddenly a hindrance came in the way. A very wicked and sinful man came suddenly to the town. 44. By giving money to the king's treasury he got himself appointed as the leaseholder of all that country, and bringing a written document to that effect he came to live in the city where the *Vaishnava* was. 45. Hearing of Dayarnava's right to the revenue

from these towns, that evil man confiscated them; just as the wicked man Duryodhana took away the kingdom from Dharma. 46. People told him fully of the laws and the moral side of the case but that evil-minded man would not listen to anyone. He had fallen into the error of being envious for illusory things and was falling into hell. 47. Misers do not like to hear of the giving of charity. Those who are not *bhaktas* do not enjoy the stories of Hari. An adulteress on seeing her husband feels troubled. 48. But that evil man would not listen to anything. He said, 'Who was it that gave this useless deed to this *bairagi*?' 49. Hearing what this non-*bhakta* said, Dayarnava considered it carefully in his mind and then immediately wrote thus to Rasik Murar:—50. 'Although you might be eating at the time you receive this letter, get up and come here immediately.' Having written this, the *sadguru* sat waiting for him. 51. Now it happened that Rasik Murar was sitting in his house eating when suddenly a man bringing a letter hurried to him. 52. On seeing this man from his *sadguru* he felt supreme happiness; just as when upon a withering tree a cloud bursts and causes a heavy downfall of rain; 53. or as when a mother sends an invitation to her daughter, who is living at her mother-in-law's, to come and visit her own home. It was in such a joyful manner that he asked the news of this man. 54. He said to him, 'What is the command of the *sadguru* with which he sent you here?' The man then immediately took out the letter and placed it before him. 55. Murar took the letter in his left hand and read it. Bowing to the command of his *sadguru* he quickly arose, although he was in the midst of eating, 56. and without speaking to anyone he started at once. He said to himself, 'I will do at once what I am told to do.' His heart rejoiced in doing so. 57. Going to the city of his *sadguru* he entered into his house. The moment he saw him, he made him a prostrate *namaskar*. 58. His

sadguru seeing that his hands were already soiled by the food he had taken, enquired of him, 'Tell me the reason why your mouth is soiled with food.' 59. The other replied to his *sadguru*, 'Your command is my authority. Receiving your letter, although I was eating at the time I immediately started.' 60. Hearing him say this every one was astonished. They exclaimed, 'No one aside from you understands the characteristic of the *bhakti* given to a *sadguru*.' 61. The *guru* then told Murar the whole affair. He said, 'This evil man has confiscated the revenue of the towns given to me for the worship of God. 62. Although he was fully told about the laws and ethics of the matter, still that evil-minded man would not listen. Go to him at once and preach to him his duty. 63. Freeing my towns from his grasp, come back quickly with your errand accomplished. Take the name of Shri Krishna and start immediately.'

RASIK MURAR AT THE CONFISCATOR'S TOWN

64. Bowing his head to the command of his *sadguru*, he hurried along and going into the city he took lodgings. 65. There were some pious people there when he told all the news. He said, 'The official in your town has confiscated Dayarnava's land. 66. Therefore, my *sadguru* has given me a command and sent me at once. So let us go just now and accomplish this errand' 67. The people replied, 'Our official is a supreme rascal, a hater of *Vaishnavas* and an exceedingly low-minded man. Therefore you should not go there hastily. 68. You are merely a true *bhakta* and he will not listen to your preaching. Why needlessly throw a golden lance into a well? 69. If one has no iron near him, what is the use of rubbing it upon a piece of pottery? A common cow cannot be compared with the wish-cow. 70. If *rishi* Agasti is thirsty, he should not go to a mere pond (instead of the ocean); instead of the

wish-tree, one should not place his desire upon a mere *ba-bhul* tree; 71. although the infant child of someone else is hungry, a barren woman's breast will not fill with milk; likewise evil-minded men will not listen to the words of a true *bhakta*. 72. So do not go personally to see him. We shall quietly accomplish your purpose by some other plan.' 73. When the leading men in the town had said this, Rasik Murar replied saying, ' My *guru* gave me the command to accomplish this purpose immediately. 74. His command is my authority. I am going to that man's house. If he will not give what I ask, there will be no help for it.' 75. In the meantime, someone told that evil man the news, saying, ' Rasik Murar is coming in order to reclaim the towns from you. 76. The moment an evil man sees *him*, he falls into deep confusion of mind. 'Hearing this the evil man was astonished.

RASIK IN A PREDICAMENT

77. Then planning a scheme this evil-minded man did as follows. He had a fierce elephant brought and in private he spoke to a wrestler. 78. He said, ' Rasik Murar is coming at once to meet me. Make the elephant stand in the square and kill him. 79. If you accomplish this, I will give you some money. ' Hearing this the wrestler said, ' I will do so. ' 80. Then he gave the elephant a great deal of intoxicating liquor and had him stand in the king's highway. Just then Rasik Murar came with a procession singing and praising God. 81. He came with a great number of his disciples who brought with them cymbals and drums and with great fondness were singing the names of God. 82. ' Victory, Victory to Thee, the Husband of Rukmini, Pervader of the universe, Father of Brahmadev, Killer of Kans, aside from Thee, O Lord of *Vaikunth*, Thy *bhaktas* have no intimate friend. 83. There is no place anywhere without Thee. The space pervades everything

but is not soiled. 84. Just as when sandalwood and *hingam* wood are set on fire, one gives out fragrance and the other a vile odour, but the fire is alike in both; 85. so the Life of the world is the same in both evil and good men. With love I bow to Thee, O Thou whose form is that of the universe.' 86. Murar was thus filled with joy and was praising the good qualities of Hari. All the people of the city watched the novel proceeding. 87. Just then the intoxicated elephant came hastening along the royal road. When the townspeople saw this they surmised what it meant. 88. They came quietly to Rasik Murar and told him, 'That evil-minded man holds against you an evil purpose, and he has sent this elephant to kill you.' 89. Although they told him this he felt no fear in his mind, but he said, 'Although I should protect this perishable body, yet at the end *Kal* (the god of death) will seize it. 90. But if it is used for the sake of the *sadguru*, all hindrances at once flee away.' Thus speaking he continued to walk forward. 91. Just then he saw the intoxicated elephant from a distance coming towards him, and his company of disciples addressed him. Listen to what they said.

RASIK'S DISCIPLES DESERT HIM

This company of disciples said to him, 92. 'The elephant is coming towards us. Let us run away from here. If we do not we shall be killed.' 93. Rasik Murar answered them saying, 'You have loyally and lovingly accepted the teaching of your *sadguru*. 94. Now loving your own bodies, you say: "Let us go away from here." If you wanted to do so, why did you at all put the *tulsi* garlands around your necks and entangle yourself in this?' 95. Hearing what he said, all took off their garlands. The *sadguru* said to them, 'I am now free from you'. 96. As they heard him say this, they all forsook him and fled and Rasik Murar alone remained on the spot; 97. just as when the hot season has arrived, clouds leave the sky;

or just as when the cold season arrives, rivers run down; 98. or as when an enemy besieges a king, his followers out of concern for themselves run away; or as when a time of distress comes, hypocrites abandon their proper duties; 99. or as when old age arrives, the organs of sense drop the object of sense; or as when a man falls into poverty, evil men forsake him; 100. or as when Shankaracharya asked for alms, he received in his hands a fused mass of hot glass and the disciples ran away; 101. so now all the people of the town looked at the strange scene from a distance. They exclaimed, 'The official of the town, intoxicated with pride, is going to kill Murar, but without any reason.' 102. In the meantime Rasik Murar with love continued to worship Shri Hari. Standing at a distance from him the disciples looked upon the scene.

THE CONFISCATOR'S PRIDE HUMBLD

103. The intoxicated and evil-minded wrestler of the elephant drove his intoxicated animal forward, but his (Murar's) confidence was that Shripati (Krishna) pervaded all beings; 104. and those whose mental condition is such, never receive any harm. The elephant came near him and humbled itself at his feet. 105. Although the elephant was intoxicated, and was of a bad disposition, still it made Murar a prostrate *namaskar*. Seeing this strange sight every one wondered. 106. They said, 'This elephant is exceedingly intoxicated. He has killed very many. Now here he is making a prostrate *namaskar* to Murar Swami. This is a most extraordinarily novel thing. 107. All the garlands which the disciples had taken from around their necks, Murar collected together and placed around the elephant's neck. 108. He gave him the mystic *mantra* 'Ram, Krishna, Narayan' and said, 'Leave your intoxicated condition and serve the saints. 109. In becoming a suppliant to the saints with one's whole body, speech and

mind, even if one loses one's life, the command of one's *guru* should not be disobeyed' 110. The elephant now changed to one of good disposition and the servants of the leaseholder hastened to tell him of the strange event. 111. They said to him, 'You sent an elephant in order to kill Murar, but instead of doing that he has made him a prostrate *namaskar*.' Hearing their story he was full of astonishment. 112. Suddenly he felt repentant and he walked to the place where Murar was, saying, 'I did not know of your extraordinary glory and I needlessly persecuted you. 113. You are truly a *bhakta* of Vishnu; now command me to do whatever you please.' Saying this he prostrated himself before Murar. 114. Rasik Murar replied to him, 'I have no other wish in my heart than that of bowing my head to the command of my *sadguru* and asking you to free the revenue from the villages intended for worship. 115. I have given instructions to the elephant (and he is now my disciple), so I desire that you should give him up to me.' The official replied, 'I will do so.' Then he again made Murar a prostrate *namaskar*. 116. Receiving a written document he took the elephant away with him. Singing the praise of God he returned to his *sadguru* having accomplished his errand. 117. Among beasts an elephant is most fierce but even he became wise. Seeing this all the people felt astonished.

AN ELEPHANT SERVES THE SAINTS

118. The elephant finally received full knowledge. At night he listened to the praise of Hari. In the daytime, going into the jungle, he used to return with faggots. 119. When all the *Vaishnavas* dine they need leaves on which to eat, so the elephant used to go into the jungle and bring back leaves. 120. Leaves with food left upon them were thrown away but the elephant lovingly ate them. Aside from them the elephant would eat nothing.

121. *Vaishnava bhaktas* continually read the *Shri Bhagwat* at the door of the *Thakurdwar* (Krishna's temple.) * The elephant listened constantly to its reading and his mind became extraordinarily indifferent to all worldly things. 122. The elephant said to himself, 'Among beasts I was born with the exceedingly fierce body of an elephant. And now by the mercy of the *sadguru* I have found association with saints. 123. In a former birth I must have done good deeds and they are now coming to fruitage.' Thus the elephant with pleasure used to think in his mind.

124. After many days had passed, Rasik Murar started to go to sacred bathing places. The *Vaishnava bhaktas* felt great joy in their minds. 125. Taking the elephant along with them the chief *Vaishnava* walked to bathing-places and the burden of all the garments and vessels they placed upon the elephant. 126. If on the way they met thieves and they began to harm the *bhaktas* of Vishnu then the elephant becoming angry would kill them. 127. He would let no one come near him, aside from one who repeated the names of Rama and who had around his neck a *tulsi* garland. 128. Thus repentant in spirit he visited many sacred bathing-places. Then many of them felt a strong desire to go to the sacred place of the Kurus. 129. As they hastened along the road they reached Arunavati. There the saints stopped the elephant and lodged there. 130. They held to their plan of remaining there three nights.

THE KING DEMANDS THE ELEPHANT

Now there was here a Muhammadan king exceedingly insolent who learned of their story. 131. A messenger had hastened to tell him that some *bairagis* (ascetics) had taken lodgings in the city and that they had brought with them a very fierce elephant. 132. 'Such an elephant of a

* See Note on Chap. 38. 14, p. 67.

beautiful appearance would certainly be an ornament to our kingdom. So you should go to Murar and forcibly demand it of him.' 133. The messenger having said this, the king felt a desire for the elephant. He said, 'Why does that beggar needlessly desire what is an ornament for a king?' 134. He then at once gave command to his officers and told them to take away the elephant by force, and if the *bairagis* did not deliver the elephant to them then they should punish them. 135. Hearing the commands of the wicked one the soldiers hastened to fulfil the order. The elephant was seated with a quiet mind in the midst of the *Vaishnavas*. 136. The king's servants said to the saints, 'The king has sent us to you. His desire has fallen upon the elephant which is with you. 137. So give it to us at once, or we shall take it away from you by force.' Hearing these words of the evil-minded men, the noble *Vaishnavas* became concerned. 138. They said to one another, 'This insolent king is an evil-minded Muhammadan and even if he is told of law and ethics he will never listen. 139. If a crow is put in a cage and an attempt is made to teach it to talk, yet it can never repeat the name of Krishna. If one should ask money of a miser, it will be in vain. 140. You might give water to the *sher* tree but it will never bear nectar fruit. If a cow should lick a butcher, will he therefore protect her from being killed? 141. A he-goat may listen to the glorification of the *tulsi* plant but he will feel no compassion for the plant (but will eat it). A drunkard when seeing a man wise in divine things feels disgust. 142. If a falcon should see a speaking parrot, will he therefore protect it? A fish might be flapping about out of the water but the crane will not feel any mercy for it. 143. So although one might preach law and ethics to those who are non-*bhaktas*, yet it will never be to their taste.' Thus thinking, the saints gave reply to the

messengers. 144. They said, 'Aside from Vishnu's *bhaktas* the elephant will permit no one to touch it. If you should touch it, it will in a moment kill you.' 145. Although the *bhaktas* of Vishnu said this, the king's messengers tried to seize the elephant, but they were not able to do so; for in its anger it attempted to kill them. 146. They then went back to the king and told him all the news. They said, 'No one aside from the *bhaktas* of Vishnu can master the elephant.' 147. The king hearing what they said suggested a plan to the driver of the elephant (the *mahant*): 'Dress in the guise of a *Vaishnava* and then go to the elephant.'

THE ELEPHANT CAPTURED BY DECEIT

148. Saying he would do so he placed a *tulsi* garland around his neck, marked his forehead with the paste of white clay, and went repeating the names 'Krishna, Gopal.' 149. In order to rob pilgrims on the road, robbers dress as ascetics; and although hunters sit to listen to a *kirtan* they will not fail to set a snare for deers; 150. as when to secure a livelihood an actor disguises himself as a *sannyasi*; or a crane seems to sit in meditation, but it is for the purpose of catching a fish; 151. likewise that very proud man deceitfully became Vishnu's *bhakta*, and he approached the elephant while repeating the name of Krishna. 152. Then coming near to the elephant he tried to catch it. In its mind it understood that through deceit the driver had changed the appearance of his body. 153. But as he came repeating the names of God, it felt that there was no remedy. The elephant therefore becoming quiet he was quickly overcome by the deceitful man. 154. As the elephant was being driven to the door of the king, its mind was very disturbed and it said to itself, 'From now on, the service of the saints comes to an end.' 155. When he was bound in his stall he would eat no grain or grass. After

seven days had passed he went to the heaven *Vaikunth*, 156. for as he was taken to the Ganges to drink water he drowned himself in it. Desiring to be in the essential form of Hari he attained final deliverance. 157. Having been associated with saints, the animal was saved without a moment's delay. What is there novel then in a man's acquiring goodness? 158. On and around the mountain of Maila the *bor* and the *babhul* trees grow. Although they look different from one another in appearance they do not lack in fragrance. 159. So an evil man might be of a low caste and his mind might be very evil, still if he finds himself in the neighbourhood of saints he will be saved. 160. So, fortunate hearers, listen to the delightful stories of the saints.

In the next chapter there is the story of how Krishna came to help Mirabai when she was in distress. 161. As the fortunate listeners seat themselves in line I shall serve them with this delightful story. Mahipati requests the listeners to feel happy through their own joy.

162. *Svasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-seventh deeply delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

MIRABAI

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Krishna.

BHAKTAVIJAYA AS THE FULL MOON

1. Listen, O hearers, with an attentive mind. Faith may be said to be a full-moon festival. There the *Bhaktavijaya* is the moon that has suddenly become visible. 2. And when revealing itself in the sky of the heart the darkness of ignorance is driven far away. The wise *chakor* bird, seeing the moon, feels great happiness in its mind. 3. Looking with faith and fondness one receives a nectar rain of love, therefore he feels in his heart a limitless happiness. 4. Others who are lovers of interesting stories receive a blessing from these stories. Feeling great satisfaction thereby they partake of the happiness of final deliverance. 5. When the moon is seen, the hesitating thieves grumble, for they cannot continue their evil course and they flee away. 6. A tree though entirely ignorant yet feels the beams of the moon on it, and when the month of *Chaitra* (April) comes, it becomes densely covered with flowers and fruit. 7. Therefore with attentive minds listen with reverence. In the previous chapter the audience listened with love to the story of Rasik Murar.

MIRABAI'S BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

8. In the great country of Hindusthan there is a holy city by name of Udaipur. The king of that region was a reverent *bhakta* of Vishnu. 9. If any uninvited guests arrived the king provided them with garments and food. If *Vaishnavas* suddenly appeared he used to worship them. 10. In his house the king used to worship the idol of Krishna with the sixteen materials used in worship.

With love he was accustomed to dress it in garments and ornaments and sing its praises. 11. Then after receiving the favour of Hari he was accustomed to eat. At this time a jewel of a daughter descended through him, a treasure-house of devotion. 12. After twelve days had passed they gave her the name of Mirabai. The mother lifted her up and placed her at the feet of Krishna. 13. She had a charming form and was extremely beautiful. When the king saw her it was a great pleasure to him. She grew up day by day and her mother and father were made happy. 14. It was at that time the custom of the king to take his daughter and go to *Thakurdwar* (Krishna's temple) * where with reverence he used to worship the eagle-bannered One (Krishna) with the sixteen materials used in worship. 15. He used to put ornaments on the extremely beautiful idol of Shri Krishna. In his love the king used to dress it in priceless jewels and pearl-garlands. 16. The idol of the cloud-dark Krishna looked beautiful with His brilliant crown, and His beautiful waistband. Around His waist was the gorgeous yellow robe and around His neck was the *Vaijayanti* garland. 17. In His ears were earrings set with jewels and on His breast was the exceedingly beautiful *Kaustubh* jewel. His glorious face was most pleasing with His broad smile.

HER RESOLVE TO MARRY KRISHNA

18. As she regularly looked at this form, Mirabai's heart was impressed by it and she said to herself, ' I am not going to marry any one except God alone.' 19. Having this determination in her mind the daughter of the king held to it in her love for God. Now it happened on a certain day that the king came and conversed with his wife. 20. The king said to the queen, ' I see that

* *ठाकुर* = *Thakur*, which in North India is one of Krishna's names; *द्वार* = door (of temple).

Mirabai appears to be grown up. We should now look for a worthy bridegroom and have her married at once.' 21. Mirabai was listening to her father's words and spoke in a sweet voice, 'I have already chosen a husband for myself. 22. If you should ask me who he is, I will tell you how you may recognize him. Shri Krishna whom you are regularly worshipping is the one I love. 23. You, mother and father, are my elders. Both of you think over the matter and offer me to the Lord Shri Krishna without making any objection.' 24. The king replied to the daughter, 'That stone idol is lifeless. You are a mere child and therefore do not understand and in consequence your love has been given to it. 25. In the *Kali Yuga* Krishna has taken the form of Buddha and has remained silent. No one can see Him in His visible form. 26. Your childish mind does not comprehend this, therefore you desire to marry this idol of Krishna. This is a foolish notion. Marry some distinguished prince.' 27. Mirabai replied, 'Hunt where I may, there is no God superior to God-supreme, the Husband of Rukmini. 28. He is the Father of Brahmadev. Although He does all things, He is still a non-doer. Shiva's burning pain left Him when He repeated Krishna's name. Do you not know this, father? 29. In the three worlds there is no God, man, or king who is superior to Him, therefore my intense love is for Him. 30. You say that this is a lifeless stone. But you should not say so. Pralhad believed God, and God manifested Himself out of the wooden pillar. 31. You might say that these are old fables, and doubts about them may come into your mind, but still in the *Kali Yuga* the Lord of the world walked from Dwarka to Dakur. 32. On a certain night the antique idol of Mathura went to Hardwar. He saw the perfect *bhakti* of Nama and dined with him. 33. Know that the pure devotion of God's *bhaktas* is God Himself, and wherever His praise is sung

with love there he dwells. 34. When a bee feels love for a lotus-flower, it buzzes around it. So the Husband of Rukmini hastens to the place where there is a *kirtan*. 35. In the *Kali Yuga* the Life of the world is silent with one who is not a *bhakta*, but with a God-loving, pious *bhakta* God speaks. 36. So hold no hesitation and listen to my request, O king. Offer me to the idol of Krishna and let me worship Him with love.' 37. Hearing his daughter say this, the king was astonished. He said, 'I understand now. I now truly understand what her life means. 38. She is but an ignorant child who has not listened to the *Puranas*, and where has she gained this extraordinary knowledge? I do not understand.' 39. So he said to his daughter, 'I give to you an image of Krishna. Take it into your room, and there worship Krishna with love.' 40. Listening to her father's acquiescence, Mirabai's heart rejoiced.

HER WORSHIP OF KRISHNA

She at once took the idol of Krishna and went to her room. 41. She installed the eagle-bannered One in her room and worshipped it with the sixteen materials for worship. The king supplied her with all materials she needed for the worship, believing his daughter was a wise girl. 42. In the early morning, having bathed, she repeated the names of God. Then taking a *vina* in her hand she sang hymns in her love. 43. Then waving the lighted wicks over Krishna she sang His praise and worshipped Him. She rubbed Him over with fragrant oil and bathed Him in warm water. 44. She then washed the idol with milk, curds, butter, honey and sugar mixed with crude sugar. After bathing Him in the five nectars she would wash Him in pure water. 45. After wiping it with her own garment she dressed Him, placed a crown on His head and adorned Him with brilliant ornaments. 46. On his forehead and person she made the three upright

and other twelve marks, and with these she made Krishna look beautiful. He looked charming in the intensely lustrous earrings and the *Vaijayanti* garland. 47. She adorned Him with the *Kaustubh* jewel and made him look lovely with a garland of pearls and a waist-cord and *radhavali*. 48. On His wrist were ornaments of *pohochya* and hero's bracelets, and on His fingers were rings set with jewels. On His feet were the ornaments of *nepur* and *vale*. These she put on Him in her intense love. 49. Around His neck was a garland of tender *tulsi* leaves and over it was sprinkled the fragrant black powder. The dark-complexioned One looked beautiful and in visible form showed His beauty. 50. She used to wave over Him incense made of ten materials and the platter light. In her love she offered Him dainty food and with a final hymn of praise she prostrated herself before Him in her love. 51. She would exclaim, 'O Purifier of the sinful, the eagle-bannered One, the adornment of Thy *bhaktas*, and One who is not known by the senses, O King of kings, Shri Krishna, You honour my crude faith in You.' 52. Worshipping Him in this way, she would invite *Vaishnava bhaktas*. She would worship them reverently and bow to them in her love. 53. If any food remained she ate it as the favour of Hari. Then after the third watch of the day she would listen to the reading of the *Bhagwat Purana*. 54. In order to listen to the stories of Krishna, Vishnu *bhaktas* used to come to her room, especially those who had knowledge of philosophy, who were examples of goodness and whose minds were indifferent to worldly things; 55. those who were indifferent and always contented, who loved the devotion to the visible God, whose touch made the sacred water clean, were merciful to the lowly, and compassionate, 56. who regarded a common citizen as on equality with a king, to whom dung and gold seemed the same and who had the same feelings for the heavenly singer Urvashi as for a she-wolf.

57. *Sadhus* and saints who were thus filled with the spirit of indifference to earthly things came to listen to her. At night full of love she used to perform *kirtans* describing the goodness of Hari. 58. Mirabai composed many poems. Putting them to use in the worship of Krishna she lovingly described His good deeds.

MIRABAI'S REVILERS

59. There were some crooked-minded men in the town who reviled her day and night, saying, 'That king's daughter has ruined the reputation of the king. 60. She collects *bairagis* (ascetics) and in the *kirtans* dances before them without shame. Although beautiful in form, a very treasure-house of beauty, she has brought a stain upon good manners. 61. When outsiders turn aside from the right road the king punishes them, but he does not know of the evil done in his own house, as his mind is always intoxicated and blind with pride. 62. Although the sun appears brilliant, yet he has for his children the ominous *Vyatipat* and *Kalyani*; likewise the king is the chief jewel among the powerful, yet this daughter is lacking in good manners.' 63. Revilers laughed and clapped their hands in ridicule and they said, 'She is like a broom which is associated with dirt though made of *mol* [holy] grass. In this way they conversed among themselves with sinful hearts. 64. A crow sits upon a tree and watches the cattle with sores upon them; so a reviler not being a witness of goodness naturally talks of one's imagined bad qualities.' 65. Thus they spoke to one another.

HER FIRM RESOLVE

The king finally understood this and full of anger he went to his wife privately and said to her, 66. 'You do not yet understand the rumours that are afloat. Our family reputation is being stained. Evil people revile the God-loving *bhaktu* Mirabai. 67. They say, "She

gathers together *Vaishnavas* and without any shame she sings in their company; she has bad manners for one of good family." 68. Now hasten and tell our daughter, "Until now you were a child and had not sufficient understanding. 69. Now the king will find out a bridegroom for you and marry you to him." Come back soon to tell me her intention.' 70. According to her husband's advice she went and advised her daughter, saying, 'Men are constantly reviling you, because you are unwilling to marry. 71. Until now you were but a child, and now the king is going to have you married to a prince. He has sent me to tell you at once of his decision.' 72. Her daughter listened and then replied, 'Tell my father that aside from Krishna every other person, O king, is the same to me as you are. 73. My decision being what it is, why do you frequently come and needlessly request me? Whatever harm there might be in people reviling me I am responsible for it. My heart has no fear. 74. When one buys anything in the market without weighing it he should never say that it is expensive. So, mother, as you do not know my heart, why blame me? 75. With cymbals and drums I perform *kirtans* in the assembly of *Vaishnavas*. Just because I do this, evil men revile me. 76. But those who are pious and wise say, "She has brought a bright light into her family line." It is only those who are not *bhaktas* who revile me and say that I have chosen for myself the path to hell. 77. Some say of me, "She has conceived a great fondness for worship." Others say, "Mirabai has become crazy." But those ignorant people do not know my pure heart. 78. With a weapon of knowledge in my hand I am determined to walk the path of *bhakti*. Evil-minded people try to blacken my pure action by blaming me, but thereby they only clean it without being paid for it. 79. Tell my father that I have become absorbed in the name of Rama.' Hearing her daughter thus express her opinion the mother quickly left her.

MIRABAI POISONED

80. Coming to the king in private she told him all the conversation. 'I spoke to her a great deal regarding her moral duty but our daughter did not pay respect to what I said.' 81. Hearing this the king then became very angry and said to his wife, 'I am going to give her the most virulent poison. Now go and with your own hands make our daughter drink it. 82. "One should either hear of his daughter as dead or that she is living peacefully at her husband's house." Such is the public saying. Think well of this.' 83. Thus speaking to his wife, the king at once brought some poison. He poured it into a cup, and sent it to his daughter by the hand of his wife. 84. She was not able to go against her husband's wish but felt supremely unhappy over her errand. The mother went along crying bitterly, for she deeply loved her daughter in her heart. 85. She went to the temple where Mirabai was and said to her, 'The king has sent some virulent poison to you.' 86. As she said this, tears filled her eyes. She exclaimed, 'O my beautiful lovely child, the god of death has now come here for you.' 87. Seeing the great love of her mother, Mirabai replied, 'Man's body is extremely perishable. It is certain that it will perish at the end of life. 88. If I have to depart because of my worshipping Krishna, why, O mother, should you needlessly mourn? If the water of a mirage should go dry, why be troubled by it? 89. If the match of a son of a barren woman is broken, why mourn over it? To say on a new moon night that the moon has disappeared from the sky is of course a false statement. 90. Because the sky flowers are withered, the bees are unhappy. As that would be absurd to say, why needlessly mourn, O mother? 91. A fruit loses its hold of the stem and falls somewhere So now my love is fixed upon the feet of Shri Krishna and I have no relation with you. 92. Pearls are developed in

water and the rich make ornaments of them. So I, born of you, have given my love to Shri Krishna. 93. Or as men in order to make ornaments beautiful set jewels in them, so the Lord of the Yadavas (Krishna) has accepted me. 94. Therefore now put aside all love for things of this worldly life and mourn no longer needlessly over me.' Thus speaking to her mother she fell at the feet of Shri Krishna. 95. Placing her heart on the god's feet she said to Him, 'My father has sent poison for me, O Krishna. 96. So now by your favour I shall reach my home in heaven. But who will there be then to give You the worship that I do? This is my great concern. 97. Revilers will say, "Because Mirabai showed her *bhakti*, poison was finally given to her to cause her death, according to the determination of the king." 98. If the non-*bhaktas* speak in this way, then who will worship You as I do? O God Supreme, I am very anxious about that. 99. Who will dress You in garments, ornaments and adornments, and weave garlands of many kinds of flowers for You and who will put these upon You? That is what makes me deeply concerned. 100. The king used to make offerings to You, now he also has become angry. Calling me the cause (of the revilers' rumours) he has turned aside from Thy service. 101. O beautiful dark-complexioned One, and lotus-eyed, evil men will continue to give me such blame as this. They will say, "Mirabai died for that reason." 102. Still however, O Husband of Rukmini, why should I worry over this blame? There is no other but Thee who brings about the past and the future. 103. When the lacquered house was on fire, Thou didst protect the Pandavas. Even the *Vedas* and the *Shastras* do not know the limits of Thy power, O Ocean of mercy, Helper of the helpless. 104. When poison was given to Pralhad, Thou, O Lord of the heart, didst protect him. If Thy name is on one's lips the god of death cannot harm him. 105. The poison that Shiva took lost its

virulence when Thy name was taken. So now why should I be troubled, since Thou art One merciful to the lowly?' 106. Then taking the cup of poison she presented it to God as an offering saying, 'Shri Hari is the Enjoyer of this.' Then she at once drank it.

COLOUR OF KRISHNA'S IMAGE CHANGES

107. Immediately a most wonderful thing happened. Listen to it, you pious people. The poison which Mirabai drank became like nectar. 108. The idol, made of stone from the Gandaki river, immediately changed its colour. It became green all over and every one saw this. 109. Because the king did not believe his wife he immediately came there. Seeing the change right before him, his throat choked with emotion. 110. He then exclaimed, 'I am a sinner, and an extremely wicked person. I have made God drink this poison.' Thus repentant in his heart, he grasped the feet of his daughter. 111. She lifted up the head of her father and made him a prostrate *namaskar*, exclaiming, 'O father, it is because of you that I have been united to Shri Krishna.' 112. Mirabai's father then said to her, 'When I made you drink the poison, the colour of the idol changed, therefore I am much concerned. 113. Go now and pray to the Husband of Rukmini that He will make the idol as it first was. By doing so I shall be made happy, and your reputation will spread in the world.' 114. Mirabai then joining her hands palm to palm, said to the idol of Shri Krishna, 'The moment You drank just a little of the poison, Your form changed. 115. At the time of the Krishna *avatar*, You killed the serpent Kaliya in the Jumna river. Now how comes it today, after taking a little poison, You have changed colour? 116. When your *bhaktas* repeat Your name poison becomes nectar, so the *Puranas* say. To-day I had experience of it. 117. When Shiva repeated Your name, His burning pain at once became quiet. But now I see that the moment You took this poison, O Lord of the

world, You became troubled. 118. If Agasti abandons his austerities out of fear of the ocean, then only, O God, will the poison be harmful to You. 119. If the burning fire begins violently to tremble at the sight of grass, then only, O Husband of Rukmini, will the poison harm You. 120. If repeating the name of Rama continually would harm *bhaktas*, then only would poison harm You suddenly. 121. But to say that in drinking nectar, O Govinda, mankind would be afflicted with disease, then only would harm come to You. 122. In order to show miracles to men, You perform many deeds of various kinds, so now, O Lord of the heart, become as You formerly were.'

IMAGE RESTORED TO FORMER COLOUR

123. Hearing Mirabai's plea, Krishna was joyful and immediately the Husband of Rukmini became as He was before. 124. In order that the world might have evidence of this He left His throat green. Thus the merciful One, destroying the evils of this life, continued uninterrupted to increase the glory of His servants. 125. The king at once arose and made a *namaskar* to the god. Then he said to Mirabai, 'You have brought salvation to your family line.' 126. Hearing what the King said, all the slanderers looked down with shame, saying, 'In persecuting this *bhakta* we have become disgraced.' 127. Cries of 'Victory, victory' and clapping of hands then took place. All the assembly of *bhaktas* rejoiced and said, 'Krishna has become favourable at this time to Mirabai.' 128. Mirabai continued to worship Shri Hari with a mind filled with satisfaction, thus manifesting the power of a *bhakta* who has attained spiritual knowledge. 129. Even today in that country in the palaces of kings there is placed in their idol-rooms the intensely beautiful idol of Shri Krishna.

130. In the next chapter there will be the beautiful story of the great *bhakta* Kanhopatra. You reverent and

pious people, listen with intense love to her delightful story. 131. He Who is the Lord of the primal *maya* and Who is the Father of Brahmadev, naturally living in my heart, causes me to relate the incomparable story. 132. Holding this determination in my mind, and that it is the Husband of Rukmini who is the Relator, Mahipati speaks of His words of compassion and blessing.

133. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-eighth very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XXXIX

KANHOPATRA

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Krishna.

HER MOTHER'S SUGGESTION ABOUT MARRIAGE

1. You pious hearers, now listen attentively. In the southern country there is the sacred city of Pandhari. Fourteen miles from there is the town of Mangalvedhe. 2. The name of the prostitute of that place was Shyama. Kanhopatra was born of her, a divine jewel. 3. In looking at her beauty the heavenly maidens became ashamed of their looks. Among mortals Brahmadev never created anyone the equal of her in beauty. 4. While she was young she learned the art of singing and dancing. When looking at her, Rambha, Tilottama, and Menaka felt ashamed of their own skill. 5. Shyama said to her daughter, 'Let us go to the king's palace and when he sees your beauty he will give you ornaments.' 6. Kanhopatra replied, 'O mother, realize that however much one may make search, no one my equal in beauty can be found. 7. If any man can be found a million times more beautiful than I am, I am willing to marry him.' Kanhopatra had decided in her mind, 8. 'All men in this mortal world seem to me now like fire-flies before the sun.'

9. Now on a certain day there was a pilgrimage going to Pandhari. The pilgrims carried banners with the design of eagles upon them and with drums the *Vaishnavas* were shouting loudly. 10. When Kanhopatra saw them she made them a prostrate *namaskar*. She asked them, 'Where are you *Vaishnavas* going? Please tell me.' 11. They replied, 'We are going on a pilgrimage to Pandhari where at Pundalik's request the Dweller in *Vaikunth* (heaven) remained.' 12. Kanhopatra further questioned the saints,

‘Describe the Dweller in *Vaikunth* (heaven).’ They answered, ‘Even Brahmadev and the other gods are unable to describe His glory. 13. He is generous, wise, beautiful and perfect. His beauty exceeds that of Lakshmi a billion fold. It is by His light that the moon and the sun revolve.’ 14. Kanhopatra further questioned them, ‘If I go as a suppliant to the Lord of the heart, will He accept me?’ 15. They replied, ‘The dwarf, the slave of Kans who was at Mathura, was accepted by Krishna and He turned her into his own likeness. 16. He at once accepted Ajamil and Chokhamela, and He, the blue-complexioned One, calls Himself the Purifier of the sinful and the merciful One to the lowly.’ 17. On hearing what the saints said to her, Kanhopatra hastened to her home and there she bowed to her mother and said, ‘I am going to Pandhari.’ 18. Then taking a *vina* in her hand the beautiful one sang with love. Kanhopatra then went to Pandhari singing the good qualities of Hari as she went along. 19. At the great temple door Kanhopatra prostrated herself with love. She said to God, ‘Hearing of Your name, I have come as a suppliant to You, O Shri Vitthal. 20. Because You are generous, brave, beautiful and perfect, and possessing the glory of the six noble characteristics, therefore I have come as a suppliant to You, O Shri Vitthal. 21. When Ajamil and Ganika came as suppliants to You, You saved them. Because the saints told me of this, I have come to You as a suppliant, O Shri Vitthal. 22. I first desired sensual things, and pride of body existed in me. But now I have abandoned them and have come as a suppliant to You, O Shri Vitthal. 23. Now accept me. I have supplicated myself to Thee, O Shri Hari.’ Thus pleading, Kanhopatra placed her head at His feet. 24. Contemplating the form of Hari in her heart, Kanhopatra remained at Pandhari and at the great door of the temple with reverence she sang describing the goodness of Shri Hari.

KANHOPATRA'S BEAUTY

25. Now it happened on one occasion that there was an evil man who went to Bedar and said to the king, 26. 'In Pandharpur at the main door (of the temple) there is a beautiful prostitute and in this mortal world there is no woman her equal.' 27. A fisherman kills fish though they have committed no wrong; just so, evil men continue their enmity against good men. 28. A hunter kills wild animals although they have committed no wrong; in the same way the wicked treat the good with constant enmity. 29. When a tiger sees a man it looks with anger at him, and seeks to devour him; so also evil men always carry enmity in their hearts against good men. 30. Bed-bugs bite men when they are asleep though men are without fault; and evil men always carry enmity against the good. 31. Likewise, although Kanhopatra had done no wrong the evil man went and told the king about her. When he heard this he sent his officers at once to Pandhari. 32. Kanhopatra was at that time in the temple singing God's praise with love and reverence. Just then the officers of the king came and said to her, 33. 'Come at once to Bedar. If you refuse, we shall take you there by force.' She replied, 'I will make a *namaskar* to the god and then start at once with you.' 34. The king's messengers stood outside the assembly-hall while Kanhopatra went into the temple. Here she joined her hands palm to palm and with very humble heart 35. she prayed, 'O Giver of Blessing to Pundalik, O Pandurang, I call myself Yours, O Shri Krishna. If You should now abandon me, O Destroyer of existence in this world, who will be blamed for it? 36. When I say I belong to you, and if the king should carry me off to Bedar, then O Dweller in Pandhari, Shri-Hari, who will be blamed for it? 37. When You heard the pleading voice of the elephant Gajendra, You immediately came to his help, O Life of the world. Now if You,

O Cloud of mercy, abandon me, who will be to blame for it? 38. When a pigeon fell into distress You removed its troubles, and now if You should reject me, on whom will the blame fall? 39. When a doe fell into a snare, the moment she remembered You, O Lord of the heart, You came to her help; so now, O Lord of Pandhari, if You abandon me, on whom will the blame fall? 40. When Ambarish was persecuted by Durvas, You suffered the agony of being born, and now if I am taken to Bedar, on whom will the blame fall? 41. You accepted Ajamil and Chokha the Mahar (out-caste); now if You should reject me, on whom will the blame fall? 42. A young toad was put into a frying pan and it at once remembered You and You came to its help; now if You should abandon me, on whom will the blame fall? 43. My heart has been united to Your essential form. If those evil men touch me, O God, all saints and good people will laugh at You.'

HER DEATH AT PANDHARPUR

44. As she pleaded so piteously, Narayan melted with compassion. Removing her soul from her body, He united it with His essential form. 45. Saints and priests near there observed the scene and the merciful One took Kanhopatra and concealed her in His lap. 46. Kanhopatra died on His lap and the evidence of this still continues. Those who go to Pandhari with reverence see this with delight. 47. The corpse was taken at that time and buried by the southern door and a *tarati* tree immediately sprang up at that spot.

48. In the meantime the messengers of the king from Bedar stood in the assembly-hall. They now asked the priests what had become of Kanhopatra? 49. The priests answered them, 'Her soul has become absorbed into the essential form of Hari.' The messengers said, 'Bring the

corpse and show it to us.' 50. The priests said to the messengers of the king, 'Her body has turned into a tree.' They replied, 'It is because you yourselves wished to possess her. 51. You dug into the ground in front of the door of the temple and through an underground passage you made her escape; and now you say, she has become a tree. You are telling us a falsehood.' 52. Without any further thought the king's messengers seized the priests and taking them to Bedar told the king all the news. 53. The Muhammadan king was a very thoughtless man, therefore the priests trembled with fear, but they placed a cocoanut and black powder as God's favour before the king. 54. As he took the favour they offered, a hair appeared in it. The Muhammadan king became angry and asked the priests the meaning of it.

MIRACLE OF THE HAIR

55. The priests felt great fear and wondered what to do. They decided to say to the king that the hair belonged to the god. 56. So they said, 'The hair truly belongs to the Dweller in *Vaikunth* (heaven) Who stands upon the brick on the banks of the Bhima and is the Advocate of Kanhopatra. 57. Come to Pandhari and see if the god has no hair on His head and then you may punish us.' They gave this in writing. 58. The king asked the Brahmans how it was that Kanhopatra was absorbed into God. The priests replied, 'She united with Him just as salt unites with sea-water.' 59. In order to obtain evidence for himself the king started for Pandhari and the Brahmans feeling great concern they said, 'What shall we do now? 60. If the king does not find any hair upon the god he will kill us. The Dweller in the world will either (help us and) spare us shame or He will disregard us. We do not know.' 61. When the Brahmans approached near to Pandhari they pleaded with God in piteous tones, saying, 'O merciful One, Madhav, You are our

Protector. 62. When the lacquered house was aflame, You Infinite One did rush to help the Pandavas, so apart from You there is no one to protect us. 63. When serving food to evil ones, You turned the good Draupadi into the four-armed one. So now, O Husband of Rukmini, You are our Protector. What concern do you feel for us in our distress? 64. When in a forest a fire raged and was burning the cows You swallowed its flames and protected the cows and cowherds. What difficulty can you have in protecting us at this time? 65. When a terrible rain was falling You held up the mountain of Govardhan on the tip of Your nail, therefore what difficulty can You have now in sparing our lives? 66. Knowing Your power we stated in writing to the king that the curly hair belonged to the four-armed One, the dark-complexioned One.'

KING GOES TO PANDHARPUR TO VERIFY HER DEATH

67. The king arrived at the great door of the temple and saw the Brahmans prostrating before God near the eagle-platform. 68. They said, 'O Infinite, O Giver of blessing to Pundalik, You are our Saviour at this time of trouble. Apart from You, O Lord of the world, we see no one to help us.' 69. Then the king went into the god's bedchamber, and looked at the god. Suddenly he saw the god's very brilliant crown. 70. His most beautiful curly hair, His large lotus-eyes, His divine earrings of the shape of crocodiles, and around His neck the garland of the *Kaustubh* jewel. 71. On His breast was an extremely beautiful ornament and both His hands were placed upon His hips. Around His waist was the yellow robe and around His neck appeared the delightful *Vaijayanti* garland. 72. He Who is the object of contemplation for the *yogis* and Whom all gods worship, He was at that moment seen by the king. 73. The moment the king saw Him he became

repentant and said to the Brahmins, 'I have seen the idol of God just as you told me He would appear.' 74. With entire reverence the king prostrated himself before God and giving an embrace to the god he said to the priests, 75. 'Kanhopatra's fortune is supreme in becoming united with the essential form of Hari. I am an unfortunate one and ignorant of knowledge, and because of that I have persecuted her.' 76. He then said to the priests, 'You say that Kanhopatra turned into a tree. How is that?' They then took the king to the southern door of the temple and showed him there the *tarati* tree. 77. The Brahmins told the king that the sacred city of Pandhari was a very ancient one and that all the gods became trees and remained here.' 78. That *tarati* tree is still at the southern door of the temple and pious *bhaktas* coming to Pandhari see it.

79. In the next chapter we shall have a most wonderful story of the *bhakta* Damaji. Mahipati going as a suppliant to him reverently describes his good qualities.

80. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving; pious *bhaktas*. This is the thirty-ninth deeply delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XL

DAMAJIPANT OF MANGALVEDHE

*Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lord
of the millions of universes.*

GOD'S READINESS TO HELP HIS SAINTS

1. Victory, victory to thee, Lover of *bhaktas*, the Husband of Rukmini, Brother of the lowly, Helper of the helpless, Giver of joy to His *bhaktas* who have no one but Thee. 2. Victory, victory to Thee, Who assumed an infinite number of *avatars*, Ocean of mercy, Home of compassion, Ocean of goodness, King of the Yadavas, and who destroys the illusions of Thy *bhaktas*. 3. Victory to Thee, Lord of the universe, Thou exceedingly generous one in giving final deliverance, the Ornament of His *bhaktas*, the Saviour of the world, Dweller in the hearts of Thy *bhaktas*. 4. Victory to the Husband of Kamala, of imperishable form, lotus-eyed, Cloud of intelligence, Creator of the universes, beautiful-eyed and Saviour of the lowly, and *Guru* of the world. 5. When Thy *bhaktas* fall into distress, Thou, O Lord of the world, dost rush to their help. Thou dost accomplish their desire without being ashamed to do so. 6. It is Thou, O beautiful-eyed One, Who art causing me to write. I am merely Thy instrument for I have no independent understanding otherwise.

GOD PLEASED WHEN SAINTS ARE SERVED

7. In the preceding chapter hearers listened with love to the description of how the Life of the world gave to Kanhopatra in His mercy a visible manifestation of Himself. 8. And now listen to the stories of His *bhakta* Damajipant who was most generous, wise and brave. Although living in the midst of earthly affairs he was

most indifferent to all earthly things. 9. In the city of Bedar there was a Muhammadan king. Damaji served him with single devotion and knowing in his heart that the things of this world were illusory, he used to worship Shri Hari. 10. The sacred city of Pandhari was about sixteen miles from Mangalvedhe where the king placed Damaji in charge of the revenue of the district. 11. The king seeing that he was a faithful man placed his store-houses also in his keeping, and there together with his family Damaji lived. 12. At noon-time he used to give food to the uninvited guests who came to him and he always placed his reverent heart at the feet of Shri Pandurang. 13. Many days had passed when suddenly a famine fell on the country and because of this even animals died from hunger. 14. Many people reached the abode of death with gold coins in their mouths (i. e. in their possession). but nowhere could they obtain food. Such were those difficult times. 15. Deserting their own country many went away but weak people had to remain there. They were not able to obtain food at Pandhari, for there were no plantations of vegetables or cornfields there. 16. Now one day a very hungry Brahman came to Mangalvedhe and His wish was great to have some food that day. 17. He came therefore to the house of Damajipant and as soon as he saw the Brahman he made him a reverent *namaskar*. 18. Damaji said to him, ' Bathe and come back quickly to receive God's favour.' Such great respect gave the twice-born (the Brahman) great joy of heart. 19. The Life of the world is always pleased when one speaks kindly to a person who asks of Him, just as a mother feels happy to see her child loved by another person; 20 or when a father sees his son respected he is greatly pleased. So the Holder of the *Sharang* bow rejoices when a man reverently pays respect to anyone who makes a request of him. 21. If any householder in the time of difficulty

has no garments or food to give, still he should speak kindly to the one asking for them and bow to him with reverence. 22. Although he may have nothing to give him he should restrain himself from speaking rough, doggish words towards him. If he scolds him and attacks him he will fall into a terrible hell. 23. So say the *Shastras* and the ethical laws. Damajipant knew this and was therefore very courteous to the twice-born, showing him his love. 24. The Brahman performed his bath and Damaji seated him by his side to dine. Many kinds of choice food were served to him. 25. Then lastly ghee was served and the priest made the offerings to the gods and asked the Brahmin to sip the water, when suddenly he saw a strange scene.

A BRAHMAN'S GRIEF

26. The man who came from Pandhari began to weep aloud and tears flowed from his eyes. All wondered at it. 27. The master of the house questioned him, 'What is the occasion and what the pain that have caused you grief?' 28. The twice-born hearing him say this replied, 'Four days have passed in which my wife and children are remaining starving at Pandhari. 29. I am a harsh, thoughtless man. I am here eating at your house but hereafter what is going to happen? That is what makes me grieve.' 30. Damajipant hearing this said to the twice-born, 'I will provide you all with food for a whole year. 31. Now quiet your heart and dine. In the evening I shall send grain to your house.' 32. Listening to this assuring promise the twice-born felt great satisfaction; just as Indra might give nectar as drink to a man at the point of death. 33. Then the twice-born ate with satisfaction and Damajipant gave him *pansupari* and gifts of money with love. Then he gave him his blessing with a feeling of pleasure. 34. Calling his servants

to himself Damajipant said to them, 'Take two loads of grain to Pandhari and give them to this twice-born.' 35. The moment this command was given the Brahman felt great joy and exclaimed, 'The Husband of Rukmini has come to my aid.' As he said this he felt great joy in his heart. 36. Then placing the bags of grain on the oxen he had them sent to Pandharpur and as the men and women there saw the bags of grain they fell on them in their hunger. 37. They tore the bags open and looted all the grain. No one's resistance was of any avail because all were without food. 38. The Brahman to whom the grain had been given began to cry saying, 'Who are you to rob me of the grain?' 39. Just as when a farmer's crop has ripened, there falls upon it a great cloud of locusts and he feels sorely troubled, so it happened to this Brahman.

STARVING BRAHMANS GO TO DAMAJI FOR FOOD

40. All the Brahmans at Pandhari then asked him for his news. 'From whence did you bring this grain? You must please tell us.' 41. He replied, 'It was Damajipant the generous, wise and brave who had mercy upon me, and gave me food. 42. God gave, but my *karma* (fate) has taken it away. Such is what has happened to me. My family's good fortune has broken down, and all the people stole the grain.' 43. Hearing the man's story all the Brahmans hastened and came to the house of Damajipant. 44. Seeing the Brahmans, he made a reverent *namaskar*. The Brahmans then blessed him saying, 'May a blessing rest upon you. 45. A severe famine has fallen upon us. You have given food to a Brahman and we have heard of your act. We have all therefore hastened here. 46. You are brave and exceedingly generous. In giving food you have no idea in your mind whether one is small or great; you have no thought of whether the person is worthy of it

or not. 47. When the sun is risen in the sky, it shines alike on every man, so when you give food you never think of great or small. 48. We are Brahmans dwelling at the sacred city and we are dying for want of food. We have heard of your fame and have therefore hastened here.' 49. Hearing the Brahmans' story pity arose in Damajipant's heart. Then giving his assurance that they should not fear he seated all the Brahmans. 50. Going into his house he said to his wife, 'Those Brahmans who dwell at Pandhari are dying for want of food. 51. They have come together and have arrived at our house. If we say "No" to them our character for goodness will suffer loss. 52. To make them happy by supplying their needs we have not sufficient grain. Therefore I feel very great concern. What shall I do? 53. The grain which I gave to a Brahman has all been taken away from him. The people are in distress from the famine and some have deserted their country and gone away.' 54. His wife said to him, 'Carry out any plan that may suggest itself to you and satisfy the Brahmans.'

ROYAL GRANARIES PLUNDERED

55. Damaji said, 'The king has two storehouses of grain which are in our charge. Those storehouses of grain I should let the Brahmans loot and thus save all their lives. 56. As soon as the king hears of this he will take my life, but by the loss of one life the Brahmans of the holy city will live. 57. If I alone love my body then death will come to all of them.' He thought this to himself and immediately came outside. 58. He at once opened the storehouses and said to the Brahmans, 'Take back to your homes just as much grain as you need.' 59. Hearing these generous words the Brahmans all blessed him and remarked, 'May the Husband of Rukmini bless you and always give you His blessing.' 60. Then all the Brahmans

looted the unlimited supply of grain and when the people of Pandhari heard of this they all hastened to Damaji's house. 61. The Brahmans, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas*, *Shudras*, grocers, *Gondhalis*, the helpless and the poor all came to Mangalvedhe, took grain and then went back. 62. The carpenters, labourers and others of of various castes, potters, barbers, and those without much understanding, hearing of Damajipant's fame came to carry away grain. 63. Masons, milkmen, workers in stone, fishermen, workers in copper and gardeners all hastened to Mangalvedhe and took away grain as much as they desired.. 64. People from Gujarat, dyers, salt manufacturers, *yogis*, saints and *mahants* exclaimed, 'The Husband of Rukmini is pleased with us and has entered into Damaji's heart.' 65. Tailors, washermen, workers in stone and an endless number of castes and out-castes came and took an unlimited amount of grain. 66. Hearers may have a doubt and say, 'Why was it necessary to bring there all castes? Why did he not attempt to select those who were worthy?' 67. But all who lived at the sacred city of Pandhari should be considered alike, so the ancient verses composed by the saints say, therefore you should not have any doubts in your mind. 68. There are ninety hundred thousand water animals in the midst of the sea, but the sea looks alike on all of them, so the Lord of the world looks with mercy upon all castes. 69. One million kinds of birds fly about in the air, and to the Husband of Rukmini all are alike. 70. There are two million kinds of trees and to the earth they are all the same; likewise the Purifier of sinners and the Saviour of the lowly considers all beings alike. 71. Those who have full knowledge of the soul, they are the ones who understand the doctrines connected with it. Seeing that this is so, they do not speak of any of the different castes as superior or inferior. 72. Damajipant quite understood this fact regarding the state of superior

bhaktas. Therefore in his kind heart he distributed food to all creatures. 73. During this famine he saved the lives of the helpless, the weak and those desperately poor but he never thought that he was the giver of grain.

A CHARGE AGAINST DAMAJI

74. When this fact was told at Pandhari, Damaji's praiseworthy deeds were noised abroad all through that country. But the mean worldly minded men burned in their hearts out of jealousy. 75. Sneeringly they said, 'He has distributed the grain belonging to the king. What has he given of his own? He has not distributed what he gathered together by hard labour.' 76. Others however remarked, 'Why do you abandon your daily avocation? Why do you needlessly revile him? If the king hears of this he will be filled with anger and will treat him very roughly. 77. One should distribute the wealth which he himself has gained by hard labour, but he has done more than that. When the Muhammadan king hears of the news, he will take his life.' 78. Thus people spoke to one another in their homes, but Damajipant full of happiness was not affected by either joy or sorrow. 79. For a whole month those who came to ask for grain took it away. Then occurred a very great hardship for him. Listen to what it was, you good and pious people.

80. A Moozumdar (tax-collector), a Kanarese Brahman, was an evil man and a hater of Vishnu. He wrote a letter to Bedar sending the following information to the king. 81. He said, 'O great king, superior lord of the city, listen to the request of your servant. Damajipant has looted your grain by the hands of Brahmans. 82. I call myself your servant and I have devoted myself to your service. Therefore I have submitted this information.' This was the substance of what he wrote in a letter which he hastened to send to Bedar. 83. As soon as the letter

was read to him the Muhammadan king became full of rage; just as when melted butter is sprinkled over a fire it blazes up to heaven; 84. or as when an elephant is made to drink intoxicating liquor, he seeks to destroy any buildings that he may come across; likewise the king hearing this news would not even investigate the affair. 85. He said, 'Damaji did not first receive my permission. How is it he distributed the grain of my storehouses?' Thus the king expressed his anger and sent his soldiers to demand money.

DAMAJI SUMMONED BY THE KING

86. The king held an evil wish in his heart to summon Damajipant into his presence and he was determined to punish him by instant decapitation. 87. The king's officers came to Mangalvedhe and showed Damajipant the royal mandate at which all the people of the town became deeply concerned. 88. They exclaimed, 'The king thinks Damaji has done a very great wrong in having his storehouses looted, therefore the king's officers have come to take Damaji to Bedar.' 89. When Damajipant read the letter from the king he understood it all. He said, 'I have done a great wrong. Why should I now sorrow over it?' 90. To the officers sent by the king to take him to Bedar, Damajipant said, 'As you go along on the road to Bedar allow me to meet the Husband of Rukmini at Pandhari.' 91. Saying this he set off for Pandharpur. After bathing on the banks of the Bhima he went to the great door of the temple. 92. He made a prostrate *namaskar* before the eagle-platform and going a little further into the inner chamber he there made a prostrate *namaskar* to the god. 93. Looking up he saw the supreme *Brahma* standing upon a brick, the Helper of the helpless, the Advocate of *bhaktas*, the Saviour of the world, the *Guru* of the world. 94. His face was exceedingly beautiful. Brilliant earrings in the form of crocodiles hung from His ears. Around His

neck were the *Kaustubh* jewel and garlands of flowers. Around His waist was the yellow robe. 95. His feet were parallel on the brick. His hands were on His hips and His sight was directed to the tip of His nose. Seeing the Lord of the world in this form he felt great joy. 96. He gave him a loving embrace and then with reverence grasped both of His feet. Gazing at His form he joined his hands together and made a request. 97. He said, 'O God supreme, Husband of Rukmini, this is my last visit to You. Never leave off Your love for me.' With this Damaji placed his head on the god's feet. 98. 'I committed a wrong known to all. The king feels great anger towards me and now he has sent his soldiers to take me to Bedar, there to behead me. 99. Still I think I have accomplished a worthy deed at the very end of life, and I have seen Your feet.' Saying this Damaji was filled with emotion, 100. and his throat was filled with sobs. Tears flowed from both eyes, and again gazing at the god's form he asked his leave to go. 101. When they heard his prayers to the god the soldiers said to him, 'Come along quickly in order that we may not delay. It is necessary for us to go at once.' 102. Damaji then made a prostrate *namaskar* to Satyabhama, Radha and Rukmini, worshipped the eagle and Hanumant and quickly started. 103. The dwellers at the sacred city said to one another, 'What the Lord of Pandhari will do, no one of us can understand.'

KRISHNA'S DISGUISE AS A MAHAR AT ROYAL COURT

104. Going around Pandharpur, keeping it at his left, Damajipant walked along quickly. And now the Husband of Rukmini, seeing Damaji's distress, did as follows. 105. He said to Himself, 'Damaji has placed his burden upon me and caused the king's storehouse of grain to be looted. Now the king is exceedingly angry and is calling him in order to kill him. 106. But I am the Advocate of

bhaktas, so say the *Shastras* and the *Puranas*. If I do not rush to his help now, I shall lose My reputation.' 107. Having thus thought over the matter, the Giver of final deliverance calculated the value of the grain and took the money along with Him. 108. The Lord of Pandhari assumed the form of an out-caste, for on account of His *bhaktas*, the Pervader of the world feels great joy in His heart. 109. He wrote a request to the king in Damajipant's handwriting, and becoming Damaji's messenger He hastened to Bedar. 110. The Husband of Rukmini fastened on His head tattered garments, placed around His neck a black cord and in His ears the *pagar* earrings (the ornaments worn in the ears of Mahars). 111. Around his waist was a loin cloth and He had a staff in His hand. Rukmini remarked to Him, 'What is it that the Lord of the world is planning to do?' 112. The Lord of *Vaikunth* replied, 'My *bhakta* Damaji has been carried to Bedar in order to be put to death. 113. For his sake I have become an un-namable (or out-caste). When My *bhak* as fall into distress I am never ashamed to help them.' 114. Taking a bag of money he sealed it with the king's seal and immediately the Holder of the *Sharang* bow appeared at the city of Bedar. 115. To the doorkeeper the Life of the world related His story saying, 'I have come from Mangalvedhe. Let your master know of this.' 116. At the king's command the doorkeeper took him into the palace. The Lord of Pandhari then saluted him with the word *Johar* (the Mahar word used in salutation). This may seem very strange to us. 117. He whose glory is not understood by even the *Vedas* and *Shastras* which describe Him, He bowed His head low and saluted the king with the word *Johar*. 118. He, to attain whom the eighty-eight thousand *rishis* perform austerities, He addressed the Muhammadan king with the words, 'You are My mother and father,' for His *bhakta* who was accused of wrong.

119. The minister of the king said to Him, 'Whence have You come?' Hearing him, the Delighter of the heart answered; listen to it. 120. 'I am the Mahar servant of Damaji of Mangalvedhe. I call Myself his hereditary slave.' 121. You will perhaps ask, 'Would He who lives on the sea of milk and reclines on the serpent Shesha use such obsequious words?' But you should not keep in your mind any question or doubt about this; 122. for when He, Krishna, was protecting the cows at the house of Nanda He openly called Himself a cowherd, and when He was at the house of Dharma, the King of the Yadavas (Krishna) gladly removed the used-up dining plates; 123. when He was Arjuna's charioteer He washed his horses with His four hands; therefore the Husband of Rukmini without any hesitation called Himself the hereditary slave of Damajipant. 124. When the king's minister asked the Mahar his name He said, 'My name is Vithonaik, an adopted child of Damaji.' Thus speaking, the dark complexioned One threw down before him a letter. 125. He recognized the handwriting of Damaji and all believed it to be genuine. He (the minister) then read the petition to the king. 126. Seeing the letter the king listened to it with curiosity and said, 'Damaji has committed a wrong and what has he now to say in the letter?' 127. The contents of the letter were as follows:—'King of kings, Lord of the world, your servant Damajipant makes to you a humble request. 128. A famine prevailed in this country and food became very scarce; I therefore sold seven hundred *Khandis* (Lbs. 1600 = a *Khandi*) of grain, for your advantage. 129. The rate of every *payali* (lbs. 8) was a rupee. I have filled a bag with this money and have sent it in your service. 130. Vithonaik is our servant and he does every form of work at our house. He will give an account of this money. Kindly send back by him a receipt.' 131. Hearing this letter read every one thought it to be untrue. For seeing

that the bag was small they felt great doubt about its contents 132. Having examined the account they went and said to the king: 'We need one hundred and thirty-eight thousand rupees as the amount.'

DAMAJI'S VINDICATION

133. When the bag was broken open it was filled with so much money that they were not able to count it and their hands became wearied in counting it. The king was amazed; 134. just as when water is taken from a ditch made in the sand and it does not fall short; just so the Life of the world, performed a miracle which He showed to them. 135. Yet no one could understand it. They were deluded by God's *maya* and they congratulated the king and called him fortunate. 136. This immense amount of money could not be finished in its counting, so they threw the bag into the king's treasury as it was and said, 'The blessed Damajipant understands what is to his own good.' 137. The king said, 'In listening to my *Moozumdar's* (deputy revenue collector's) accusation I needlessly demanded money. It was as if one should believe the braying of a laundryman's donkey and drive away a wish-cow.' 138. Krishna then spoke from outside, 'Please give me the receipt quickly. Mangalvedhe is very far from here and it will take me a long time to go there.'

ROYAL MANDATE

139. A letter was written and sent by him to Damaji saying, 'All the money has been received and I have ordered the deputy revenue collector to be put into jail. 140. The moment you read this letter, at once confiscate all his rights. I wish you to live at Mangalvedhe always.' 141. The king gave garments to Vithonaik and honoured him. Seeing this the Life of the world [who was in the form of the servant Vithonaik] gave His blessing to the king: 142. 'May you enjoy a long life and may the

whole wealth of the world come to you.' Then making a low bow He took with Him the letter. 143. The king gave to Damaji garments and ornaments with great satisfaction of mind, and by the hands of his servants sent to Damajipant a palanquin, elephants and a chariot. 144. With them the Life of the world started for Mangalvedhe. This was not known to Damajipant. 145. Coming to Bedar they missed one another on the road. The Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven) thus shows to His *bhaktas* an illusory *ilā* (miracle).

DAMAJI AT ROYAL COURT

146. The king's messengers brought Damajipant to Bedar. When the king heard the news he went forward to meet him. 147. The king gave him an embrace saying, 'Vitho the Mahar came and gave me the full amount of money. 148. We affectionately sent to you garments and ornaments by his hand. We listened to the evil report of the Kanarese tax-collector and were angry. 149. After having sent for you, Vithonaik came yesterday. He told us of what you had done. 150. He brought us your letter in your handwriting and having given us an immense amount of money he returned.' 151. When he heard this, Damajipant was most astonished and said to himself, 'The Lord of Pandhari has wearied Himself in order that I might escape any hardship. 152. He Who is qualityless, formless, desireless, and Who can never be compared with anyone else, He took the form of an out-caste and brought on His head a load of money. 153. Seeing the lustre of His crown, a billion suns see their lights fade away. He, the Ancient of Days, the Husband of Lakshmi, fastened a rag upon His head. 154. He cast aside His crocodile-shaped earrings and put into His ears such earrings as are worn by the out-castes. Putting aside His beautiful *Kaustubh* jewel He wore in its place a mere string. 155. The Lord of the world cast

aside His conch-shell and disk and took a staff in His hand. He must have removed His yellow robe and for my sake dressed in a loin cloth. 156. He must have removed from His feet His ankle-ornaments and put on torn sandals. Cursed be my life that I have wearied the Life of the world.' 157. So thinking these things, Damajipant was moved to emotion and in his love tears flowed from his eyes. I cannot describe his joy. 158. Together with the king everybody was astonished. They acknowledged, 'He was not a real out-caste, but the Husband of Rukmini. Through experience we have learned to recognize that fact. 159. If he were a mere man how could he have carried so heavy a load? When counted out the money was one hundred and thirty-eight thousand rupees. 160. And still there was nothing lacking in the bag (i. e., the money in the bag did not diminish). The hands of those who were counting became wearied, so they had to throw it into the king's treasury as it was.' 161. When all spoke in that way Damaji showed great sorrow of heart saying, 'I will not again repeat that act which wearied the Husband of Rukmini. 162. In putting earrings in, if the ear drops down, then what is the need of the gold? I shall not again do that by which the Life of the world is wearied.'

DAMAJI GOES TO LIVE AT PANDHARPUR

163. He then said to the king, 'I no longer wish to work in your service. Give me permission to live in Pandharpur.' 164. The king said to him, 'God has become your debtor, and through you I have met with the Holder of the disk (Krishna).'

165. To return now to the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna). He hastened to Mangalvedhe and there informed those at Damaji's home of his welfare and then at once became invisible. 166. Damajipant then gave up the king's service and came to Pandhari to live. Filled with emotion he embraced the god. 167. He exclaimed, 'O

Purifier of the sinner, Husband of Rukmini, Brother of the lowly, Lord of Pandhari, no one can ever count the number of my transgressions. 168. Thou art worthy of the worship of Sanak, Shiva, and the other gods. They sing the praise of Thy feet. Thou didst become an un-namable (or out-caste) and didst save my life. 169. Thou art the Father of Brahmadev and the father of the holy Ganges river. O Lord of the world, for my sake Thou didst needlessly become an out-caste man. 170. Who was there to call Thee by the name of Vithonaik brought up as a child at Damaji's house? Still Thou didst so report to the king. 171. Having exclaimed thus, tears flowed from his eyes because of his love, and gazing at His form he placed his head at the god's feet. 172. Together with his family, Damajipant went to live at Pandhari, and filled with love he performed *kirtans* and described the goodness of Hari. 173. Citizens of that holy city exclaimed, 'Blessed, blessed is his *bhakti*. He has made the Husband of Rukmini his debtor and has increased his reputation immensely.' 174. Because he has performed a wonderful deed, the Holder of the disk (Krishna) is pleased with him.' So said the people to one another in their homes.

175. In the next chapter is the extraordinary story of the life of Mrityunjaya. Listen to it, you pious people, with pleasure. It is one that will give joy to all. 176. Some one may not have any specially reverent feeling for the story, still it purifies by the mere hearing of the words. When the *chakor* bird receives the nectar of the moonlight, the light is seen everywhere. 177. Therefore Mahipati beseeches all, old and young, to bring love into their hearts and worship the Husband of Rukmini.

178. *Swasti* (peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the fortieth very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XLI

MRITYUNJAYA SWAMI

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Krishnn.

KRISHNA DWELLS IN THE HEART

1. Victory, victory to Thee, Lord of Pandhari, Performer of *lilā* (voluntary deeds), Pervader of the world, Thou Whose form is that of the universe, Lord of the heart, eternal Lord of all, Pandurang. 2. Victory, victory to Thee, Lord of Kamala, Soul of the universe, the Light of the heart, even the *Vedas* find it impossible to describe the state of Thy essential form. 3. Victory, victory to Thee, Hari and Shiva without a limit, supremely generous. Thou Saviour of the world that dwellest in the temple of the hearts of Thy *bhaktas*. 4. Victory, victory to the essential form, made visible, O dark-complexioned like a cloud, Treasure-house of goodness, Delighter of the heart, God supreme, the highest of beings, let love exist in our worship of Thee. 5. Now reveal Thyself in the words I use and cause me to write properly the stories of Thy *bhaktas* by which the hearts of my hearers may be filled with waves of love.

THE MUHAMMADAN KING SHANTA BRAHMANI

6. In the preceding chapter there was the extraordinary story of the God-loving *bhakta* Damajipant. In his distress the Husband of Rukmini came to his help at once. 7. At Bedar there was a king by name of Shanta Brahmani. After ruling many days, he came to the knowledge of the value of indifference to earthly things. 8. If you ask me how this was brought about then listen carefully to the following story. Taking his wife upstairs he held a conversation with her.

9. Both had on them garlands of many kinds of flowers and sandalwood paste. They wore brilliant garments, ornaments and adornments. Being without any fear both lived enjoying themselves. 10. Around them they had placed servants to guard the palace. While sitting at the window they had sugar and bananas brought which they ate with pleasure. 11. As they peeled the bananas they threw the skins down on the path. Suddenly a crazy, weak beggar came there and began to eat the peelings. 12. The queen seeing the beggar there pointed him out to her lord with her hand saying, 'I do not understand how he could come there when entrance was forbidden.' 13. Hearing these words of his wife king Shanta Brahmani became very angry. Calling the doorkeepers he said to them, 14. 'I have placed you at the entrance door in order that you may not allow anyone to come into the palace grounds. How is it that this crazy beggar has come inside?' 15. Thus speaking he began to beat the doorkeepers, all of whom came to the beggar and attacked him with kicks and blows.

THE KING ASKS THE BEGGAR WHY HE LAUGHED

16. The beggar paid no attention to his pain but began to laugh. Shanta Brahmani seeing it simply wondered in his mind. 17. The king said to his messengers, 'Do not strike him.' King Shanta Brahmani was moved to emotion by the beggar's pain and he began to cry. 18. The king then questioned the beggar and said, 'As the doorkeeper was beating you, how is it you began to laugh? Tell me quickly.' 19. To this question of the king the beggar replied, 'I laughed at my *karma* (fate), seeing how strangely odd it was. 20. If I was punished so severely for taking merely such a small bit of banana peel what will be *your* future? And therefore I was wondering. 21. By coming into the palace grounds I was punished so

severely, then I am deeply concerned about *you* who regularly sleep in the palace. 22. If by tasting the banana peelings with my tongue, my *karma* (fate) causes me to be kicked, I cannot think what punishment *you* will have who eat the inside pulp. 23. If a fish in swallowing a bait of lifeless flour meets its death, then who can measure the consequence to the man who takes life and makes his livelihood upon it. 24. The thought of your future pain made me laugh.' Hearing what this beggar said the king's heart changed at once.

THE KING IN PENITENCE RETIRES TO A FOREST

25. Feeling repentant he discarded all his kingdom and wealth and without anyone knowing of it he went into the great forest. 26. There king Shanta Brahmani sitting alone became exceedingly sorrowful. 'I am living by myself like an unfortunate person without the support of saints. 27. I do not know how to worship God. I do not know what means to adopt for attaining union with Him, nor do I know what punishment to give to my body. 28. What are the teachings regarding indifference to worldly things? How may I repent? How will Shri Hari look upon me with the eyes of pity when I am in any distress? 29. I do not understand how to perform *manas puja* (mental worship). I do not know how to make offerings to the eagle bannered One. How can my life be made fruitful? I do not know. 30. In what way should I live among men? When shall I meet with saints?' Such were the thoughts which came into the mind of King Shanta Brahmani.

KING AND PILGRIMS

31. It now happened that in the month of *Ashadh* (July) at Pandharpur a pilgrimage passed by with its loud shouting of God's names. 32. Cymbals, drums and *vinas* were being played, *Vaishnavas* in their joy were singing, dancing, bowing to one another and embracing one another in

love. 33. Many brilliant banners were fluttering in the air, and before them were waved banners with the design of eagles and other ensigns of greatness. Many *Vaishnavas* walked along. 34. Looking at such a gathering the king, Shanta Brahmani, felt great joy in his heart. In love he went towards them, making prostrate *namaskars* to the *Vaishnavas*. 35. He exclaimed to himself, 'Blessed is this day in which I have had contact with saints. The good deeds which I have committed in a former birth have truly begun to bear fruit. 36. That which I was wishing for in my heart I have obtained this day.' Regarding this with great satisfaction he at once started to go with them.

THE KING AT PANDHARPUR

37. When he arrived at the sacred city of Pandhari he bathed in the Chandrabhaga river. Then worshipping at Pundalik's tomb he bowed to the saints and good people. 38. After circumambulating the sacred city, Shanta Brahmani came to the temple. Hearing people shout loudly in their *kirtans* he felt great joy. 39. One may have seen and heard of the great numbers of sacred bathing-places and their deities, but so extraordinary a sacred city as Pandhari is not to be seen in the three worlds. 40. When one looks anywhere to find anything with which to compare it no such place can be found. It matters little how evil the heart of a wicked man might be, he cannot help loving Pandhari. 41. When men bathe in any other sacred bathing-place they immediately become proud of their deed, but the moment they see the Chandrabhaga river they make prostrate *namaskars* to one another. 42. In seeing such a sacred bathing-place Shanta Brahmani felt great joy in his heart. Then prostrating before the eagle-platform, with love in his heart he moved from there to another place. 43. Bowing to all the *Vaishnavas* he gave them embraces in his love and went into the inner chamber

to see and worship God. 44. There he saw the supreme *Brahma* standing upon a brick. He reverently embraced His breast and made a *namaskar* at His feet. 45. He exclaimed, 'Victory, victory! Ancient of days, Thou with a visible form, Lord of the heart, Performer of *lilā* (voluntary deeds), Lord of all, Lord of Pandhari, Shri Vitthal. 46. Hearing of Thy good deeds, I have come as a suppliant to Thee, O Krishna. But I have not met any *sadguru* in order that I may know Thy essential form. 47. O fulfil the longing of my heart.' Thus exclaiming he sat persistently at the door of the temple and would take no fruit, vegetables or even water. Because of his repentance he refused all food.

MRITYUNJAYA AS SAHAJANAND'S DISCIPLE

48. After three days had passed the Husband of Rukmini showed His pleasure to him and in a dream brought direct to him the book called the *Vivekasindhu* (by Mukundraj). 49. The Lord of Pandhari told him in a dream to receive the mystic *mantra* of *Swami Sahajanand* at Kalyan, and after He had told him about it he awoke. 50. He did not see the Lord of Pandhari now, but the book alone was there. Seeing this wonderful miracle he felt great astonishment. 51. He said to himself, 'The *Guru* of the world has given me a revelation of Himself and by that means I have become purified.' Then reading the *Vivekasindhu* book he began to contemplate by himself its teaching. 52. He remembered also that in his dream he was asked to make Sahajanand his *guru*. Then asking leave of the god to go he made his bow to Him. 53. He went at once to Kalyan but the *sadguru* was not there. So afterwards in the month of *Kartik* (November) he came again to the sacred city of Pandhari. 54. While he was there the *Swami Sahajanand* suddenly appeared. He also had come on a pilgrimage. *Shanta Brahmani* met him at once and told him about his

dream. 55. *Swami Sahajanand* gave him instruction and gave him the name of *Mrityunjaya*. King *Shanta Brahmani* then hastened to go back to the city of *Narayanpur* to live. 56. Here listening to the teaching of his *sadguru*, and contemplating what he said, he acquired a love for study. Then coming to understand exactly the truth he experienced the facts about the soul.

A JANGAM LOSES HIS CASTE

57. At the place there was a **Jangam* by name of *Bhavaraya* who was supremely pious and learned. He came as a suppliant to *Mrityunjaya* and lovingly took instruction from him. 58. There was another *Jangam* there by the name of *Samuchchaya* who was considered the superior of all *Jangams*. He reviled *Bhavaraya* and had him excommunicated. 59. He said, '*Mrityunjaya* belongs to the *Muhammadan* caste and he has the very least of knowledge. How is it that *Bhavaraya* was ignorant of this and took instruction from him? 60. Will a *Brahman* when he sees dainty food in the house of a *Shudra* partake of it? Even if the water of the *Ganges* is brought in a cup with intoxicating liquor one should not drink of it. 61. Although one may have new sandals they should not be placed upon the head when walking. Should one worship the steps of the temple in the shrine of God? 62. Though one's anklets were made of gold one should not wear them as nose-rings. Will the castor oil tree seek to be on the same level as a great tree? 63. Even if brass is polished highly it does not become equal to gold. Although *Vrindavan* (a bitter fruit) is mixed with sugar, still it will remain bitter. 64. The king's prostitute may be beautiful and clever, still will she sit by the king during the "Blessing the day ceremony?" So one should never pay respect to

* (1) The name of an individual who follows *Shiva*, worships the *lingam* and hates the *Brahman*; (2) the title of a *guru* among this sect.

one of the Muhammadan caste in place of a *Sadguru*.' 65. With such opposing thoughts Samuchchaya continued to revile him. Bhavaraya hearing him then became very sorrowful. 66. He therefore went to Mrityunjaya at his hermitage and told him his story. The *Sadguru* hearing him gave him an assurance. 67. He said to him, 'Hold steadily in your faith and in a quiet mind worship God. Never listen to the words of one whose hatred comes from wrong thoughts.'

KING KASHIPATI

68. There was also there a king named Kashipati. He was a supremely generous man, a veritable statue of knowledge and exceedingly devoted to the *bhakti* of Shiva. 69. He used to invite every day to his house ten thousand *Jangams*. With the sixteen materials for worship he used to worship them and gave them dainty food to eat. 70. Now it happened on a certain day that Kashipati seated the *Jangams* in a line for a feast, lovingly performed worship and was serving food on their plates. 71. The king served to all melted butter and sugar with his own hands, and then gave the command that the offering should be given to Shiva. 72. When they unrolled the cloth they found it empty of the emblem of the god. Saying that a strange thing had happened, they felt ashamed. 73. Just as a Brahman learned in six *Shastras* who loses his sacred thread will feel ashamed, so it happened to these people. 74. How could they now worship and how could they have dinner? They had to perform a penance of death. When Shiva has gone they should not seek to prolong their lives. 75. When they first put the *linga* (emblem of Shiva) around their necks, their *gurus* tell them they must never remove it to the end of their lives; they make them promise to that effect. 76. The question of who should be excommunicated confused them because the condition of each was the same. There were

ten thousand men who sat at the feast and all wondered what they should do. 77. One remarked, 'Let us give up our lives.' Another said, 'Why live any longer?' A third said, 'What is the use of a feast? A great hindrance has suddenly appeared.' 78. Still another remarked, 'We have eaten the food of a king and that has been our fault. So Shiva has deserted us all.' 79. Another said, 'Food is not to be blamed. It is because we have no pure faith. That is why Shiva has openly left us and showed us this wonderful *lilā* (miracle).' 80. Thus they spoke to one another but no one saw any remedy. The opinion of every one was confused and all looked down in shame. 81. Kashipati of Kalyan then said to the *Jangams*, 'It would seem to me that some one of you has persecuted a saint. 82. For this reason the Lord of the universe has become angry with you all and has gone away.' Having listened to the words of the king (Kashipati) they consulted with one another.

TWO DOGS VOMIT SHAIVITE EMBLEMS

83. Then Samuchchaya the *Jangam* confessed saying, 'The fault has occurred through me. I reviled Bhavaraya calling him the disciple of a Muhammadan. 84. This terrible fault is mine. My conscience bears witness to this. We do not know what is the remedy for this.' 85. The king then said to them, 'Let all of you pray to Mrityunjaya and then you will certainly be freed from your troubles.' 86. This word of the king was acceptable to all and the whole line of diners started to go. 87. They all went to the hermitage of Mrityunjaya and prostrated themselves before him. They told him what had occurred and stood before him with hands joined together palm to palm. 88. They said, 'We have truly spoken roughly to Bhavaraya. For this reason it appears that Shri Shankar has disappeared from us.' 89. Hearing their words, Mrityunjaya seated them and shouted out to them all. 90. He said to them,

'At my home I have two dogs. One by the name of *Vedanta* (philosophy) and the other by the name of *Siddhanta* (facts). It is they who stole your *lingas* (emblems of Shiva) and have taken them away I think.' 91. He then called *Vedanta* which at once appeared. He said to the dog, 'Why have you needlessly stolen the *lingas* (emblems of Shiva) belonging to the *Jangams*? 92. Throw them all down here.' Listening to Mrityunjaya's words the dog vomited up five thousand *lingas* (emblems of Shiva). 93. He then called *Siddhanta* and the other dog appeared. He also vomited up five thousand *lingas* (emblems of Shiva) and threw them down. 94. Seeing this astonishing sight all the people there were amazed. They said, 'We do not understand the power of the *bhaktas* of Vishnu.' 95. No one was able to recognize and pick out his own (emblem of Shiva). So they again prostrated themselves with reverence before Mrityunjaya and said, 96. 'Just as the Husband of Parvati showed to Shriyal one hundred and eight Chiliyas but he could not recognize his own Chiliya, so it has happened to us. 97. Then the Dweller in *Kailas* (Shiva) being favourable to him, He gave His own son to him. So do for us.' Saying this they fell at his feet. 98. After these piteous words, each (emblem) went to the one to whom it belonged. All then shouted, 'Victory, victory,' 'Hara, Hara' (Shiva, Shiva). 99. They then called Mrityunjaya *Dnyansagar Ayya* (an ocean of knowledge). They then went into the king's palace and sat down to a feast. 100. In this way the *Vaishnava bhaktas* show their marvellous deeds. Mahipati comes to them as a suppliant to describe their good deeds with love.

101. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the forty-first very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XLII

BHANUDAS*

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Khrishna

INVOCATION

1. Victory! victory to Thee! Vasudev, Lord of the Earth, lotus-eyed One, Husband of Rukmini, Giver of happiness to His *bhaktas*, without whom there is no happiness. 2. Victory, victory to Thee of the lotus-navel whose form is the Universe, Father of Brahmadev, Lord of heaven, Radiant of form, dwarf-shaped, indescribable by *Vedas* or *Shastras*. 3. Victory to Thee, unlimited universal Arm, the all-seeing Eye, He who fills universal space, Thou who hast spoken in the words of the *Vedas*. 4. O Thou, whose form is universal radiance, Lord of the heart; because Thy *bhaktas* cannot fully know Thee, Thou didst take a *saguna* form and set them to worshipping Thee. 5. O Lord of Lakshmi, Thou becomest to them whatever they desire, just as a mother of graceful carriage leads her child along, holding it by the hand, 6. her heart rejoicing in the sweet prattle of the little lisper. She speaks back to it in the same prattling way, kissing it in her love. 7. The same thing happens to Thy *bhaktas* who lacking knowledge praise Thee in foolish babbling words, and Thou, Life of the world, in Thy loving mercy makest Thyself as simple to them.

THE BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF BHANUDAS

8. In the previous chapter there was recorded the deeply delightful story of the life of Mrityunjaya, in which you hearers became absorbed as you listened. Such is the infinite glory of the saints. 9. Now it happened that the

*For further information regarding Bhanudas see the first volume of this series.

sun appeared as an *avatar* at Pratishtan. And I would that you good people would listen with loving attention to the interesting story. 10. To a wise, holy and pious Brahman, a worshipper of the sun, there was born the treasure of a son to the great delight of his heart. 11. Day by day the boy grew and in due time the ceremony of the sacred thread was performed. His father and mother bestowed on him boundless love.

12. It happened one day that in assigning him the task of studying the *Vedas* the father showed anger. Out of fear of that anger the boy sulked. 13. He left the house. He made great efforts to find a place in which to conceal himself. At first he failed, but suddenly in his wandering his eye fell on a temple. 14. This temple lay underground. People did not visit it, so the boy at once entered and remained there in hiding. 15. There was an antique image of the sun in that temple and the boy at once prostrated himself lovingly at its feet. 16. Seeing the boy's devotion the sun was pleased and said to himself, 'Although this child is ignorant his heart has firm trust in me.' 17. The sun then assumed human form and approached him. He gave the boy milk as much as he could drink and gave him the assurance of his protection from all fear. 18. He said to him, 'Let your heart be without fear, keep Shri Pandurang in your remembrance. If you should ever fall into any distress at your call I will immediately be present with you.'

19. Turning now to the father and mother, who with sad hearts were searching for their son, it happened that seven days passed and yet they had not found him. 20. But one day the Brahman's son stepped outside the temple. There happened to be there one of the twice-born and he spied the lad. 21. He called out to him but the boy at once ran back into the temple. The Brahman then came

into the town and related the event to the father. 22. The father and mother rejoiced to think that their son had been found, and taking some of their townspeople with them, started to find him. 23. There in the forest they discovered to their surprise a deserted temple. They lighted torches and bravely descended into it. 24. As they entered they all saw the image of Narayan (sun) and the Brahman's son sleeping with his head on the feet of the image. 25. The father and mother bent over their son and drew him to their lotus-hearts exclaiming, 'How has it happened that you have survived in this place all alone?' Tears flowed from their eyes. 26. The people then asked him, 'How have you kept yourself alive here? For your hunger and thirst you surely could not obtain food here.' 27. He replied, 'A supremely glorious, radiant Brahman has appeared to me here. He has fed me with milk and thus saved my life.' 28. Hearing these words of the child, all marvelled, exclaiming, 'Evidently seeing the child's trust and devotion, Suryanarayan (the sun) has manifested himself to him.' 29. And it was because the sun had manifested this delight in the boy, that he was given the name of Bhanudas (slave of the sun). The parents carrying him on the hip returned to the town. 30. They remarked to one another, 'It is God who has saved his life. Let us forbear speaking to him in harsh words. Narayan (God) in His mercy has given us this gift of a son. 31. Whatever events are fated to occur they will take place in time. Why should we needlessly distress his heart?' 32. Thus comforted in mind, the parents let affection govern them. 'We will not assign him the task of acquiring knowledge,' they said, 'lest he should again sulk and leave us.' 33. They now made search for a bride, and had Bhanudas married. But in the intervening days Bhanudas devoted himself entirely to the worship of Sri Hari.

HONEST BHANUDAS BECOMES AN UNWILLING
PEDDLER OF CLOTH

34. When the allotted life of Bhanudas' parents had come to an end they passed away. Bhanudas, however, without concern for consequences was unwilling to engage in any worldly occupation. 35. He would serve no one for remuneration; he would engage in no trade or commercial dealings; he would have no borrowing or lending of money; he refused ever to enter the king's service. He wished only to be occupied with the worship of Pandurang. 36. There was need, however, in his home for food and clothing. His wife moreover was distressed in mind. And although he had children, yet he lived indifferent to all worldly needs. 37. A few men of influence therefore came together to speak to Bhanudas on his affairs: 'Your wife needs food and clothing,' they urged, 'but you seem unable to comprehend this. 38. While your father and mother were living they bore on their own heads the burden of your worldly necessities. But what is going to happen in the future, if your mind continues indifferent to these things? 39. It is also true that you have not acquired much learning. Hence we make you a certain proposal. Let your ear listen to it with respect. 40. We will supply you with a hundred rupees as working capital. Buy cloth and peddle it. 41. From the profit you gain, you will be able to provide your family with food and clothing. Carefully preserve the principal and return it to us gradually as you may find it convenient.'

42. These men then went to the market, purchased cloth and handed it over to Bhanudas. These men had other peddlers under them, and Bhanudas was committed to their care. 43. 'When you go to the market-place take him along with you,' they told them. 'Seat him at your side, and put him in the way of gaining his livelihood.

44. The pedlars listened to the words of the men and consented. They took Bhanudas with them and seated him beside them. 45. They taught him their secret numerical code: *mulu* (five), *udanu* (three), *angolu* (ten), *kevala* (one), *kathi* (twenty), *pavitrū* (seven), 46. *selu* (six) *poku* (four), *dhakar* (one thousand), *avaru* (two), and other numerals. They explained to him about the cloth and how to sell it; 47. how one should carefully protect the principal, and what pains should be taken to sell at a price that would yield a profit; how also if one should tell the exact truth, one would certainly meet with loss 48. To this last advice Bhanudas replied, 'I will never, so long as time lasts, speak an untruth. I will speak only the absolute truth.' 49. At this all the pedlars laughed. 'It is evidently written on his forehead that he must live by begging,' they exclaimed. 'This explains why it is that he will not listen to anything we say. His name should rather be *Poor man*.' 50. One remarked, 'Let him once get the taste for gain, then he will utter falsehoods in plenty. One has never seen anyone favoured by Fortune who speaks the truth in his business relations.' 51. How true it is that one who is born blind thinks that all men are blind. Even savoury food seems bitter to one bodily sick. 52. So it is that the man who is false in heart sees no one true. As a man's heart is, so others seem to him.

53. But Bhanudas showed great courage. He refused to utter any falsehood in his business. The result was that every one marvelled at it and people flocked to his stall. 54. If a customer asked him about the cloth he would tell him the exact cost price to him and the profit he was asking on the principal. He gave them but one answer 55. 'If you approve of it take it. If not, pass to another stall.' This is all he would say to them and then con-

tinued his repeating of the names of God. 56. And all came to recognize the truth that Janardan (God) does fill man. ' Bhanudas will never even to the end of time speak an untruth,' they declared. 57. Customers appreciating his truthfulness all came to him. The other pedlars, dishonest in their dealings, had to watch the marvel from where they were. 58. They began to murmur, 'That we have given him a place beside us has been to our injury.' And hatred now arose in the heart of these evil-doers. 59. ' He sits beside us and draws away to himself our customers,' they cried. '(Hypocritically) we look him boldly in the face, but within we burn with rage to no avail.' 60. Another remarked, 'He throws a spell on people. That is why they have become bewitched. They pay down whatever price he asks, and no one even haggles over it.' 61. Still another observed, 'People have come to believe in him and that is why they patronize him. We are untruthful. We are the slaves of worldly desires. And God does not approve of this.' 62. Finally one said, 'Let us now speak the truth.' To this another objected saying, 'Though we should do so, no one would regard us now as really worthy of confidence. 63. Once character is fixed it continues the same through life. This we see exemplified in Bhanudas before our very eyes. 64. A dog may be sitting quietly in the house. Thieves may come and steal away the bread. The accusation, however, will fall on the dog, for no one could know by intuition who really took it. 65. A tiger may be lying down peacefully but it will be said he is crouching to spring and kill. A miser may become an ascetic, but it will be said that he has started out on a course to deceive. 66. An adulterer may indeed visit sacred watering places, but it will be said that he is in search of others' wives. A cat may be lying perfectly quiet, but people will remark that it is looking for a rat. 67. So it is with us. Our whole life has

been spent openly in the sight of others, speaking untruths. And now, though we should act with honesty, people will say, "This is useless hypocrisy." 68. Bhanudas began before our very eyes with a very small business in cloth, and now he has become a prosperous man. God has been his Helper. 69. We make great effort, but we are unable to obtain sufficient bread to satisfy our appetites. Our creditors come and sit at our doors. What are we to do ? 70. Ever since we gave Bhanudas a place beside us we have become bankrupt. He has drawn away all our customers and we are now in distress. '

BHANUDAS TURNS AWAY FROM WORLDLY AFFAIRS

71. One day all those pedlars started on their way to a distant market-place. Their journey ending, they put up in a temple precinct. 72. Bhanudas the *Vaishnava bhakta* had also come along with them to that market-place, and as usual had placed his stall next to theirs. 73. Now it happened that a *Haridas* had come to that same town, and had arranged for a *kirtan* that very evening. An invitation had been passed round the town that all should come to the recital. 74. When Bhanudas heard of this he was filled with great delight. 'To-day is an auspicious day, the *Ekadashi* (the eleventh of the moon),' he exclaimed, 'I must go and listen to this *kirtan*.' 75. Bhanudas invited the pedlars to go with him to the *kirtan*. (As they refused) he said to them, 'If because of laziness you are unwilling to come with me, you will at least be sleeping beside our wares. 76. So protect my stall and care for my goods with yours.' This request of Bhanudas made them very angry. 77. 'You have become God-crazy' they sneered. 'You are for ever telling the truth. Now go to this Hari recital and take your goods along with yourself. 78. We are all wearied and are going to sleep. Seek some other place for your stall where you can display your wares.

79. There are thieves around here and we wish for no words of blame from you. We cannot understand what gain is going to fall into your lap from going to this *kirtan*.' 80. Bhanudas replied, 'Well, let my goods remain here or be stolen (I care not). My heart is fixed on Pandurang. I will never desert Him' 81. Thus remarking, Bhanudas the *Vaishnava bhakta* left his goods as they were and hastened away, soon reaching the place where *sadhus* and saints were gathered to listen to the *kirtan*. 82. With his heart full of joy he made a *namaskar* to the *Haridas*, 'Happy is this occasion' he said, 'the *Ekadashi*' (the eleventh of the moon). He then embraced the saints. 83. The *Vaishnavassang* lovingly the Rama and Krishna stories that bring salvation to mankind, and Bhanudas listened with great delight, for he had a great love for them.

MALICIOUS PEDLARS

84. In the meantime the evil-minded pedlars sat beside their wares and planned as follows. 'Bhanudas has left his wares here and has gone to the *kirtan*.' 85. Let us therefore play a trick on him. Unknown to him we will let his packhorse go loose, and throw his bundle of cloth into a ditch. 86. When he comes back to ask us about it, we will say, "Thieves came while we were in deep slumber and stole it without our knowing of it." 87. He will then go back to his own home, and we can then divide the cloth here among ourselves.' Having thus planned, these evil men let his packhorse go loose. 88. There was a deep pit near by and into it they threw the bundle of cloth. Then clapping their hands over the deed, they said to one another, 89. 'Since Bhanudas has been with us he has acquired wealth while we have become poor. All customers go to him. 90. Now all our anxiety is gone. Without the use of medicine the itch has disappeared.' In this manner these evil men talked the matter over among themselves.

91. Just as Duryodhan rejoiced in his heart when he robbed Dharma of his wealth, so these evil-minded pedlars rejoiced in their hearts.

GOD'S CARE FOR BHANUDAS

92. But when the Husband of Rukmini saw the calamity which had befallen Bhanudas, He immediately arrived on the scene, saying to Himself, 'Bhanudas is sitting listening in the *kirtan* in fixed contemplation. 93. These evil-minded men have conspired together and thrown his wares into the pit. What plan shall I follow?' said the Life of the world to Himself. 94. 'His packhorse will wander away somewhere. Where will he then look for it? He has put aside fondness for worldly things and gone mad after my worship.' 95. Thus thinking to Himself, Pandharinath assumed the form of a Brahman. Finding the packhorse near the market-place he sat down holding it. 96. He who reclines on the serpent Shesha in the ocean of milk, He on whose feet Lakshmi meditates, He who espouses the cause of his *bhaktas*, Captivator of the heart, He sat holding the horse. 97. He who does not come quickly even into the mental conception of the *Yogis* as they sit in meditation; He, the espouser of the cause of his *bhaktas*, Lord of the organs of sense, He sat holding the horse. 98. He, *Sri Ranga*, who cannot be attained by religious rites, by sacred places, by austerities, or by *yoga*, He, Pandurang who gave his promise to Pundalik, He sat holding the horse! 99. He, the father of Brahmadev, the Creator of the limitless universe, caught the horse of Bhanudas as it was wandering about, and sat holding it in the public square!

PEDLARS' DISASTER

100. In the meantime the pedlars were sitting in the temple precincts reviling Bhanudas: 'He will soon come back to look after his wares' they said. 101. 'When he hears all we tell him that has happened here, he will be-

come greatly agitated.' As these villains were thus talking among themselves the dark-complexioned One became very angry. 102. And while the Life of the world was expressing his anger, suddenly thieves approached. They robbed the pedlars of their goods and gave all a severe beating. 103. They loosened all their packhorses and took them all away. And now the pedlars sat weeping. 'We persecuted Bhanudas,' they said, 'and Pandurang has made us experience the result.' 104. One remarked, 'According to our *karma*, so are our minds. We certainly lack knowledge. We have not used forethought.' 105. Still another remarked, 'Fortune has played us false. Therefore we performed this loathsome act. Bhanudas is a single-minded *bhakta*. With no gain to ourselves we have troubled him.' 106. They now made a loud outcry but no one came running to them from the town. The Husband of Rukmini, skilled in the use of *maya*, had cast a spell upon all.

GOOD FOR EVIL

107. Turning now our attention to the *kirtan*, there were heard shouts of joy. The drum and the *vina* gave out their sweet sounds. The air was filled with the music, while the names of God were being acclaimed aloud. 108. The night was lacking only four *ghatikas* when the *Vaishnavas* sang the final hymn of praise, waving incense reverently before the Husband of Rukmini. Sweetmeats were then distributed. 109. Bhanudas made his obeisance to the *Haridas* and started back to his lodgings. Suddenly he saw a Brahman sitting by the wayside holding a horse. 110. As he was passing by, the horse neighed. 'How happens it that my horse is here?' he said to himself; 'I cannot understand it.' 111. Just then the Brahman who had thrown his scarf around the neck of the horse and was sitting by it, holding it, saw Bhanudas and suddenly vanished from sight.

112. As Bhanudas saw this marvel he was overwhelmed within with wonder, but leading the horse along he arrived at his lodgings. 113. Here he found the pedlars weeping aloud. Asking them what the trouble was about, they made full confession to him. 114. 'We evil-minded wretches sought to do you harm. We threw your bundle of cloth into yonder pit and let your horse loose. 115. When it was the second watch of the night thieves appeared and robbed us of our all. Now to whom shall we go and complain of the ways of destiny? 116. All our horses and bundles of cloth are stolen. We have also received a severe beating. And now it looks as though our business has come to an end. 117. We have lost all our capital. God has protected yours. We threw your bundle of cloth in yonder pit. Let us all now go and take it out.' 118. When Bhanudas heard their story his heart melted. 'I think,' he said, 'it must have been the Husband of Rukmini who was sitting holding my horse. 119. Bothereation! All this worldly business is without real value. It is no storehouse for the happiness of the soul. Worthless wretch that I am! I have been seduced. 120. Think of it! That He, fair of complexion, delicate with the eyes of a lover, clothed in the yellow silk robe, Life of the world, in the form of a Brahman should be sitting holding my horse! 121. No longer will I engage in a business that brought weariness to Pandharinath.' With this repentance in heart he then addressed the pedlars. 122. 'Let your minds be at rest. Thieves have beaten you, but let not your hearts sorrow.' 123. Then drawing the bundle of cloth out of the pit he distributed the pieces of cloth among them. Bhanudas further offered to them his horse and his money and then left them.

BHANUDAS BECOMES AN ASCETIC

124. He returned to his home and there devoted himself entirely to the worship of Hari. He put aside all

thought of whether he was being honoured or dishonoured. He spent his life singing in *kirtans* the attributes of God. 125. He refused to enter anyone's service. He would not let his mind be involved in the anxieties of worldly affairs. Though he had a wife and children, yet he acted with perfect indifference to worldly things. 126. It became his custom in the months of *Ashadh* (July) and *Kartik* (November) to lead bands of pilgrims to Pandhari. On the sands of its river he would perform *kirtans* accompanied by cymbals, drums and loud acclamations. 127. He would compose verses in different metres and would plead earnestly with the dark-complexioned One. His heart was full of intense love. In his *kirtans* his voice would choke with emotion. 128. When Bhanudas stood up to perform his *kirtans*, tears of joy filled all eyes. And the Husband of Rukmini, seeing this love of theirs, would himself come there and dance. 129. Wicked men, evil-minded and the ignorant, even they as they listened became filled with love and would exclaim, 'We could listen for ever to these enlightening *kirtans* sung by his lips. 130. How false indeed are the illusions of this worldly existence! How perishable are these bodies of ours!' And as these listeners gained in knowledge they began to love all creatures.

131. Adopting the non-begging method of the ascetic life, Bhanudas accepted such food and clothing as were voluntarily offered to him. His own lips asked nothing of anyone. 132. The idea of 'mine' and 'thine' had now no meaning to him. He realized the unity of all creatures. He had put aside all thought of differences. 133. Thus Bhanudas' mind was characterized by utter indifference to worldly things. He spent his days and nights in the joy of his heart, in the worship of Shri Hari.

134. In the next chapter we shall listen to the story of the taking of the Saviour of the world by King Ram-raja to Vidyanagar. The intelligent listener to this story will feel joy within his heart. 135. You saints and good people in this divine assembly, Mahipati stands in your presence with a handful of flowers, in the form of Marathi verses.

136. *Swasti* (Peace) ! As the Lord of the earth listens to this book, the *Shri Bhaktvijaya*, He also will be pleased. Loving, devoted *bhaktas*, listen then to it. This is the forty-second delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XLIII

BHANUDAS

(CONTINUED)

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Son of Vasudev.

GOOD DEEDS SECURE AN ETERNITY WITH GOD

1. Listen, you hearers, good and loving people. To-day the Wish-tree has come to fruitage. These intensely interesting stories of the saints are now revealed to you as enlightening and incomparable. 2. I would have you know the indescribable glory of Vishnu, the limits of which even Brahmadev does not know, and of which the *Vedas* also are ignorant, a glory which is love beyond compare. 3. Those to whom good deeds are the supreme thought, they finally attain the abode of Brahma. Those who perform sacrifices go to Indra's heaven. 4. Those who have confidence in ancestral worship will finally live and move in the abode of those ancestors. Whatever God men worship they finally reach His abode. 5. Those who worship the evil demons become like them after death. So those who give ear to the stories of the saints will finally attain *Vaikuntha* (the heaven of Vishnu). 6. The moment *Chakrapani* (Holder of the disk, Krishna) sees his *bhaktas* in distress He comes to drive it from them, and finally giving them his own four-armed form provides them a place in the home of full union with God. 7. Such a promise Pandharinath has given in connection with this book. Therefore, O hearers, listen with a reverent and loving heart.

8. At the close of the preceding chapter we saw how the Husband of Rukmini revealed Himself to Bhanudas, and how deciding to become free from all worldly desires Bhanudas gave up his commercial affairs.

THE KING OF VIDYANAGAR HEARS OF THE
GLORY OF VITHOBA

9. Now listen to the following tale. There was a Brahman living in the sacred city of Pandhari. Feeling the desire in his heart for money he started on a begging trip from country to country. 10. Visiting many towns and cities in his journey he arrived finally at Vidyanagar. Entering the city he thought to himself, 'I must meet the king.' 11. So the Brahman took his bath, performed his devotions and then attempted to enter the palace. The doorkeeper would not let him go inside, however. He said to him, 'Just wait here a little while. 12. I will go and get the king's permission; then sir, you may enter within the palace.' The servant returned after informing the king, and the Brahman then entered within. 13. Ram Raja, when he saw the Brahman, bowed and worshipped him. The Brahman felt exceeding joy and exclaimed, 'Blessed are you, great king, the very image of charity.' 14. The king then enquired, 'Whence have you come, sir? With what desire in your heart have you come? Please tell me.' 15. To this enquiry of the king the Brahman replied with joy thus: 'The sacred city of Pandhari is a most wonderful city. It is there that I dwell. 16. I have heard of your generosity and have hastened here begging from country to country on my way.' The king listened to his story and felt keen pleasure. 17. The king replied to the Brahman, 'Let your mind be at ease. I am going now first to my bath, and then to the worship of the goddess. 18. Come with me and see her temple. The temple glitters with gold. I shall make to her the various offerings, and present her with the *tulsi* leaf.' 19. The Brahman was delighted at this conversation with the king and accompanied him as he went to worship the goddess. 20. The king had planted costly flower gardens around the temple. In the inner

temple he had placed the image of *Ambika* (mother, goddess). Here he now performed the appropriate ceremonies of worship. 21. These were accompanied by the loud noise of many musical instruments. While the king performed his part of the worship the Brahmins repeated *mantras*. The loud noise was a joyful one. 22. In worshipping the goddess they used the sixteen rites; they clothed her with garments, and adorned her with jewels. Thus adorned with these various divine jewels the goddess looked beautiful. 23. They perfumed her with sandal oil and other scents. Around her neck was placed a garland of flowers. With incense and lights the king made his offerings. 24. Lighting the five lamps he waved them before *Mahamaya* and fell at her feet making a prostrate *namaskar*. 25. After distributing gifts to all, the king sat for a while in quiet contemplation. He then entered into conversation with the Brahmin from Pandhari.

RAM RAJA'S BOAST

26. 'You see,' said he, 'you may hunt throughout the three worlds, and yet you will not find a divinity the equal of Rajai. I have never seen or heard of her equal. Blessed is her boundless marvellousness! 27. You also see with your own eyes this beautiful temple. It is plated with silver. Around it I have planted this flower garden, that I may worship the Mother of the world with flowers. 28. All the people of Vidyanagar come here to worship her. I have commissioned my ministers to her service. The special rites of worship I perform myself. 29. You live at Pandhari, but its glory cannot be equal to that here. It is hardly possible that Pandurang can be worshipped with such pomp as Rajai is worshipped here. 30. When it is poor Brahmins who have to do the worshipping, how can they provide such garments and adornments as those I provide?' The Brahmin listened to these words of the king and his heart became filled with anger.

THE BRAHMAN EXTOLS THE GLORY OF

VITHOBA OF PANDHARPUR

31. 'King of kings,' said he, 'you in your vain pride, without even having seen Pandhari, boast of your own divinity as alone great. 32. You have plated the temple with silver and you proclaim to men that ornamentation. But our sacred city was built by *Vishvakarma* (the Creator of the world) and plated with gold. 33. There are forests there of the wish-tree. Touchstones and wish-stones lie about like common pebbles. Divine floating banners flash everywhere like lightning. 34. There are herds of wish-cows there. The *Vrindavana* (*tulsi* altars) are set with jewels. And here loving *Vaishnavas* joyfully perform *kirtans*. 35. The river *Chandrabhaga* is there flowing with nectar. She is the mistress of all sacred waters. By the mere sight of her, men become freed from this worldly existence and attain heaven. 36. The beautiful *Rambha* and *Tilottama* come and dance on the eagle-platform. *Gandharvas* (the heavenly choir) sing by the door of the temple, and space itself resounds with their music. 37. The God supreme, the Husband of *Rukmini*, who was living blissfully in the ocean of milk when He saw his *bhakta* *Pundalik* there, He came at once to that spot. 38. And *Chakrapani* (Holder of the disk, *Krishna*) placing His hands on His hips has remained standing there. If He sees any of His *bhaktas* in distress, He immediately comes in person to their relief. 39. *Lakshmi* even becomes ashamed of herself as her eyes behold His glorious form. Ten millions of suns hide themselves away before the glory of His crown. 40. Fair of complexion, delicate in form, holding the *Sharang* bow. His yellow garment tucked tightly about Him, His glorious bewitching face is adorned with the divine earrings of crocodile shape. 41. In order to see this form of His with their own eyes, *Indra* and the three hundred and thirty million gods stand constantly before Him with hands palm to palm, and reverently and lovingly praise Him. 42. He

whose name the Dweller in *Kailas* repeats to Himself day and night, He whom the *Vedas* and *Shastras* describe, He whose limits Brahmadev even does not know, 43. He whom the serpent Shesha praised with his thousand mouths, each tongue splitting into two, and then settled into quietude, 44. such an one is the divinity Pandurang. Such is the holy city of Pandhari. Such is the purifying water of the Chandrabhaga. Where else are such to be seen in the three worlds ? 45. Without first paying attention to all this you vainly praise your own works of ornamentation. Rajai is your family goddess, but I care nothing for her. 46. Why, she comes regularly to Pandhari and there she performs the service of sweeping the temple and smearing it with cow-dung. ' As the Brahman thus spoke the king became furious with rage.

THE ENRAGED KING THREATENS THE BRAHMAN

47. ' Before my very face he has insulted the deity whom I worship,' the king exclaimed. ' Heedless of what he is doing, he sings the praise of his own deity. 48. I ought to put him to death, but being a ruler I would be blamed. So I will punish the Brahman and drive him away to regions out of the city.' 49. The king therefore said to the Brahman, ' You have spoken falsely. I certainly have never heard of this golden Pandharpur. 50. And this goddess Rajai, who continually remains here where she first revealed herself, you with your own mouth have called her a slave of Pandurang. I am going to punish you and drive you away into the jungle. ' 51. The Brahman replied, ' Hear, O king, I have told you the exact truth. You should come at once to Pandhari, and see the Husband of Rukmini for yourself. 52. His glory is ten million times as great as I have described it. If (after coming to Pandhari) you do not see it to be so, then you may rightly punish me. 53. So long as you have

not seen God supreme, this Rajai seems to you to be great as a lamplight seems bright only so long as the sun has not arisen. 54. So long as one has not seen the elephant of Indra, other elephants seem great. The stars seem bright only so long as the full moon has not arisen. 55. One praises other juices only so long as one has not obtained nectar. So long as one has not seen the ocean, a river seems extraordinarily great. 56. Until one has seen a forest of wish-trees, one delights in a mango grove. Until one has listened to the wisdom of the *Vedanta*, one is pleased with heretical doctrines. 57. So long as one has not seen the mountain of gold, so long does brass glitter. So until one has seen Pandharinath one is satisfied with other deities. ' 58. The king listened and responded, ' I will at once hasten to Pandhari, and if I see there things just as you have described them to me, then only will it be well with you, O twice-born. 59. But if you have told me untruths, then I shall immediately punish you. ' The king then commanded his ministers to prepare the equipment for the journey.

RAM RAJA GOES TO PANDHARPUR

60. Accompanied by horses, elephants, chariots, palanquins and a small army, the king started on his journey that he might see Pandurang. 61. They marched along to the sound of many musical instruments. Behind them all walked the Brahman thinking to himself, ' The Husband of Rukmini will either protect me from humiliation in my need or He will disregard me. 62. If the king does not see things as I have described them to him he will undoubtedly punish me. ' 63. So bringing the image of Pandurang to his mind he praised him from his heart and prayed, ' O Thou who tenderly carest for *bhaktas*, Husband of Rukmini, come to my rescue in this hour of my need. 64. I your Brahman, helpless and poor, went on my begging

journey from country to country. Through the proclaiming of Thy name I have gained support for my family. 65. O God, the saints of old have proclaimed Thy wondrous renown. And I have but described the same renown to the king, but he is unable to regard it as true. 66. The king has become angry at what he calls an insult to his family goddess, and he is now on his way to witness for himself, O Pandharinath. 67. I have related to the king what Pandhari really is. It is only in this *Kali Yuga* that it seems to men to be built of earthen walls, for there is no essential difference (between gold and earth). 68. Just as coins buried by some ancestor appear to the luckless man as mere charcoal, so Pandhari, though really golden, seems otherwise through a wrong conception. 69. As the saints of old have described Pandhari, in those same words I have described it. But now if the king does not see *Chakrapani* (Holder of the disk, Krishna) as I have portrayed Him, he will punish me. 70. Then I shall commit suicide, and the words of the saints will be proved false. Moreover, when good people will hereafter read about the glory of Pandhari they will not believe it. 71. O Protector of the helpless, Husband of Rukmini, in this my present distress come quickly to my rescue.'

BRAHMAN'S WORD VERIFIED

This appeal of the Brahman for mercy made the Saviour of the world aware of his need. 72. He thought to Himself, 'Because the Brahman has extolled my profound renown he is being dishonoured, so I shall have to make things seem as he has described them' 73. And with this the Holder of the *Sharang* bow said to Rukmini, 'The king of Vidyanagar is hastening here on his way to see us. 74. Pandhari in reality excels all that the city of Dwarka was. We must show this to the king in the twinkling of an eye and thus remove his doubts. 75. If we do not

do this, the Brahman will be punished. He will then take his own life. Our reputation will suffer loss and the saints and good people will laugh at us.' 76. The Mother of the world after listening to these words made at once a *namaskar* at His feet and said, 'I shall bring here at once the buildings of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) and show them to the king.' 77. No sooner did she think this than in less than a moment it all took place, and by so doing, the Life of the world, expert in the use of *Maya*, magnified the glory of his *bhakta*.

THE KING HAS A GLORIOUS VISION

78. Now let us turn to Ram Raja as he was hastening along and arriving near Pandharpur, and while the Brahman in great fright was imploring the aid of the Husband of Rukmini. 79. Ram Raja called the Brahman into his presence and said, 'If you do not now satisfy my doubts I shall bring you to dishonour.' 80. He called for an elephant to be brought to him, and seated himself on its canopied seat. (From this height) he gazed at the city of Pandhari and saw a strange and marvellous sight. 81. Just as the constellations appear about the full moon, so around about the pinnacle of the temple lustrous buildings seemed to glitter. 82. As the king saw this wonder he was overwhelmed with amazement and exclaimed, 'Pandhari looks exactly as the Brahman has described it to me.' 83. Repentant in heart, the king descended from the elephant and making a prostrate *namaskar* to the Brahman, said, 84 'I see before me exactly what you described to me. It was my ignorance that made me proud and led me to wrong thoughts.' 85. With these words the king again made the Brahman a *namaskar*, and freeing his mind of all ill feeling he sat at his feet. 86. The Brahman himself was also amazed and exclaimed, 'The Husband of Rukmini has indeed come to my rescue.' The three worlds could not

contain his joy, and with love he sang His praise. 87. 'Chief among *bhaktas* and their head-jewel was Pundalik,' he sang, 'and *Chakrapani* (Holder of the disk, Krishna) came from Dwarka to see him. 88. Of all the sacred waters the Ganges is considered the chief and yet the Chandrabhaga surpasses her. By the mere sight of her the world is purified. She permits no place for pride. 89. It is true that the Life of the world dwells in such places as Mathura, Gokul, and Vrindavan. Shri Krishna resides also in Dwarka for the sake of his *bhaktas*. 90. But to me the glory of this sacred place seems incomparable.' Thus with utter abandonment the Brahman in his love sang of the glories of Pandhari. 91. The king now had cymbals and drums brought and made a celebration. He gathered together the *Vaishnava bhaktas* and loud was the joyful noise they made. 92. As the king continued gazing he saw before him a forest of wish-trees and touchstones and wish-stones lying about like pebbles.

WONDERS OF PANDHARPUR

He approached the open lands around Pandhari. 93. Here there were innumerable wish-cows all round. The king amazed, ejaculated, 'Blessed are these infinite wonders.' 94. Holding the Brahman's hand the king continued gazing. He saw the resplendent city of Pandhari and his eyes were dazzled by it. 95. He saw various birds sitting on the trees singing in their delight. Swans and peacocks danced strutting about in their joy. 96. Ascetics were performing their austerities. Brahmans were studying the *Vedas*. The *bhaktas* of Vishnu with drum and *vina* were singing His praise. 97. Heavenly damsels, collected here and there in groups, were dancing, thereby compelling eyes to stare at them and infatuating sensually-minded men. 98. Here and there saints were sitting discussing the

supreme Soul, and as they experienced absorption into that Soul they embraced one another. 99. One hundred and eight sacred rivers, taking a bodily form, came and bathed in the Chandrabhaga and were purified, and this took place while the king was looking on. 100. A golden *tulsi* altar had been erected studded with gems, and the *tulsi* adorned with garments and jewels was being worshipped by men and women. 101. The king having first bathed in the Bhimarathi then went to see and worship the god, and behold! Indra and all the other gods were also there, beholding the Lord of Pandhari.

RAJAI AS A SLAVE

102. All the eight supernatural powers, as slaves, were personally serving about the god. Suddenly the king recognized Rajai amongst them. 103. 'She is our family goddess whom we adore in our worship in Vidyanagar,' he exclaimed, 'and she is sweeping the dooryard here at Pandhari!' The king was amazed. 104. '*Udo!*'* The king called out to her and began immediately to question her. 'Mother,' he asked, 'why are you here? You are here sweeping with your own hands!' 105. Bhavanī (the wife of Bhava, Shiva) replied, 'You hold vain pride in your heart. Endless female slaves like myself come here to Pandhari to serve. 106. Here to this dooryard of Pundalik all sacred waters come, and prostrating themselves on the ground, thereby becoming immediately pure, let their waters flow.' 107. Still amazed, the king looked further and saw to his surprise Narad (the *rishi*) and Tumbara, singing the god's praise. 108. Males and females with four arms were seen as actual beings. The king threw himself prostrate before them in the fulness of his joy. 109. Both the gods, Victory (*Jai*) and Conquest

* See *Bharata Itihas Samshodhak Mandal* Partak 11, p. 271, and 18, p. 79.

(*Vijaya*) holding weapons such as the shell, disk and others, stood before the temple door. Divine banners flashed like lightning in the heavens.

KRISHNA'S HALO DAZZLES RAM RAJA

110. After prostrating himself on the ground the king entered the temple. As he saw the light from the god he had to close his eyes and hold on to the hand of the Brahman. 111. Then there met his gaze the *sagun* form of the fair-complexioned, delicate One, lotus-eyed, clothed in the yellow silk robe, smiling faced, Life of the world; 112. that form which is the object of the *yogi's* meditation; that form which the five-faced (god Shiva) contemplates in His heart; that form which when one attempts to describe, all descriptions are seen to fall short of reality. 113. When describing the taste of nectar, what other sweet juice is there with which it can be compared ? So God supreme, the Husband of Rukmini, though He can be seen, cannot be compared. 114. Those who are His *bhaktas* can see Him with their eyes. They alone, through actual experience, know the marks by which He is to be recognized. The mere wise, who undertake to praise Him, become as dumb as the *Vedas*. 115. The king then with love embraced the incomparable image of the Supreme *Brahma*. And gazing intently on His form, tightly clasped His feet. 116. The king now said to the Brahman, 'You are my dear friend, my *sadguru*, my close companion. How can I thank you enough for your kindness ! You have enabled me to meet the eagle bannered One. 117. I have here seen things ten million times as wonderful as you described them. I have seen the Lord of heaven with my own eyes and have felt its exceeding joy. 118. I also saw my family goddess Rajai sweeping the threshold of the temple and Indra also, accompanied by other gods, standing there with their hands palm to palm. 119. I now

see nowhere in the three worlds a sacred city as wonderful as Pandhari, a deity as supreme as Pandurang and a purifying stream like the Chandrabhaga.' 120. An insect inside of a fig thinks to itself, 'This is my vast universe.' When the fig is broken open and it looks round about, its mind is lost in wonder. 121. So it happened to the king and clasping the Brahman's feet he cried out, 'I was enveloped by ignorance, but through you I have been freed from it.' 122. But now suddenly all the marvellous vision which had been shown to the king vanished, and lo! his eyes now saw only the earthen walls, to his great astonishment. 123. The sacred city of Pandhari is in reality what was shown to the king, but because of the effects of a man's *karma* it seems to him to be of earthen walls. 124. The king with amazed mind now saw the city just as it appears to us to-day, and he exclaimed, 'I have seen a great miracle.'

THE KING TAKES THE IMAGE OF VITHOBA TO VIDYANAGAR

125. The king now thought to himself 'Why should I now in vain worship Bhavani? If the ocean of milk is near at hand, why should I leave that to bathe in river-water? 126. If I see a lake of nectar, why should I take even heaven-made medicines? When a wish-tree is close by, one should not sit in the shade of a *babhul* tree. 127. Why throw away the touchstone already in one's hand, and become an alchemist? If a wish-cow comes to one's house, why worship a goat? 128. When the sun is shining into the house, why bring in a lamp? So having had a vision of Pandurang, why now worship a goddess?' 129. Thus reasoning with himself Ram Raja besought the eagle bannered One thus, 'God supreme, King of heaven, fulfil the desire of my heart. 130. I have the desire in my heart to take You to Vidyanagar. So giving

to me, Your suppliant, the assurance of Your blessing, come along quickly with me, O God, my King.' 131. The god replied, '(I agree to come) but if you during the journey should rest me on the ground I shall certainly remain at that very spot. Or if in your kingdom you are guilty of any injustice I shall come back to Pandhari.' 132. As *Chakragani* (Holder of the disk, Krishna) thus replied, the king was overjoyed in heart. 'I shall place relays of men at intervals along the route and thus take the god with me,' he said to himself. 133. And with this idea he stationed men at intervals from the sacred city of Pandhari as far as Vidyanagar, and taking the idol (out of the temple) started to carry it away. 134. The officiating Brahmans did not resist. They knew their power could not prevail against that of the king. The idol was lifted up and carried along from hand to hand. 135. Thus Pandurang was carried along swiftly to Vidyanagar and there installed. The king in his own person performed the installation rites and the ceremonies of worship.

PANDHARPUR WITHOUT VITHOBA

136. Now let us turn to Pandharpur where in the month of *Ashadh* (July) *Vaishnavas* arrived on their pilgrimage. Here they learned the fact that the god had gone to Vidyanagar. 137. Pandharpur now seemed desolate like a body without life, or like a river without water. The city was oppressed with fears. 138. It was like an army without a king, like constellations without the moon or as a virtuous, devoted wife, deprived of her husband, seems unprotected among men. 139. So with Hari gone to Vidyanagar, the whole of Pandhari seemed desolate. Dejected, the saints and *mahants* sat down by the eagle-platform. 140. 'Whose praises can we now sing?' they said among themselves; ' the Life of the world has deserted us. The promise he gave to Pundalik (to remain

here always) has become a broken promise.' 141. Pious *bhaktas* arrived and all exclaimed, 'What has happened to the King of Pandhari?' And all learned the news that the god had gone to Vidyanagar. 142. The saints, *sadhus* and other *Vaishnavas* said to one another, 'Someone should go to Vidyanagar and bring back the Husband of Rukmini.' 143. They discussed this proposal among themselves but no one gave any assurance that he would go on such an errand. Some indeed remarked, 'Pandurang has paid no regard to his promise to Pandalik. He will not come back by any effort of ours.' 144. Another added, 'We have no entry into the king's palace. If the king should learn the purpose of our coming he would punish us well.' 145. One brought forward an excuse from the point of view of the attributelessness of God, 'God is within us,' he argued; 'if we have no experience of this the philosophers (knowers of self) will have misled us.' 146. Still another added, 'Whatever and however anything takes place, it is by the will of God. We should watch it, but let no one be troubled thereby.'

BHANUDAS OFFERS TO GO AND BRING VITHOBA BACK

147. In this group of saints was Bhanudas the *Vaishnava bhakta*. He gave them a solemn assurance saying 'I will go and bring back the Husband of Rukmini, or give up my life in the attempt.' 148. And with these words he started at once. Arriving at Vidyanagar at night time he began to question the people. 149. 'The king has brought here from Pandhari the image of Pandurang. Tell me quickly where he has installed it.' 150. From fear of the king no one was willing to tell him the facts and they replied, 'We do not know.' 151. Bhanudas then asked someone privately and was told by a *Vaishnava bhakta* that the king had installed the Husband of Rukmini in the palace temple and that he worshipped

Him in private; 152. that after the king had worshipped Him no one was allowed to see Him; that the king had put padlocks on the doors of the temple; and had stationed a guard for His protection. 153. When Bhanudas heard this he became full of joy. Midnight arrived and all the guards were asleep. 154. When Bhanudas approached the door of the temple at that moment the padlock dropped. He entered within and prostrated himself before the god. 155. He gazed for a moment on the god's form and then lovingly embraced him. With a voice choked with emotion he thus pleaded with him:—

BHANUDAS CHIDES THE GOD AND PLEADS

156. 'Husband of Rukmini, Dweller in *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven), Giver of the promise to Pundalik, King of the Yadavas, have You dropped Your affection for us and become subject to the king ? 157. You gave a promise to Pundalik that You would never go away from Pandhari. And now this promise is seen to be false. 158. It is evident You do not care for our lowly worship. The king here worships You with the sixteen rites. Regarding that as happiness, You, *Adhokshaja* (Vishnu), eagle bannered One, choose to remain here. 159. Because of these heavenly garments and adornments and these offerings of various dainty foods you have lost recollection of us, poor people! 160. O *Purushottama* (Good Being), You have left Rukmini, Radha and Satyabhama. O dark as a cloud, the king by his professions of love has caused You to leave us. 161. You have left Pandharpur and made Vidyanagar Your abode. But great *rishis* and noble *bhaktas* are waiting there for You. 162. Rambha, Tillottama, Urvashi, Menaka and the eight chief wives of Yours came there to serve You, but leaving them, O Father of Brahmadev, You have comfortably settled Yourself here! 163. Or is it because of some awful fault of ours, the fear of which has caused you to run away from us ? Or may it

be because we have asked of You tokens of Your love that You have run away? 164. Can it be that it is the noise and confusion in the *kirtans* whereby You are unable to sleep? And so You have selected for Yourself this quiet spot? I now understand what the facts are. 165. Or could it be the countless pilgrims who gather there, in meeting whom You become weary, that has made You to come here to Vidyanagar for a quiet rest?'

VITHOBA'S REPLY

166. The Life of the world listened to these chidings of Bhanudas and replied, 'You are speaking without due thought these disconsolate words. 167. I am not enjoying these many kinds of rites with which I am worshipped, nor these garments, adornments and ornaments. My soul is really pining away for a sight of the banks of the Bhima river. 168. It is the king who has brought Me here and imprisoned Me. And you have also hardened your hearts in that no one has come here to take me back. 169. I used to give you *riddhi* (prosperity), *siddhi* (supernatural powers) and the four forms of deliverance, but you used to worship Me out of love alone, disregarding those benefits. 170. Aside from those benefits I had nothing I could give you. So that My debt to you, incurred by your service of love, I was unable to repay, hence I deserted you.' 171. As the Husband of Rukmini uttered these words (of explanation), He became choked with emotion. But tears of joy flowed from His eyes and moved by mutual love both sobbed together. 172. The Life of the world then embraced Bhanudas and said, 'Tomorrow in the early morning, as you worship I shall reveal Myself to you' 173. The Holder of the *Sharang* bow then removed his necklace of nine jewels and placed it on Bhanudas, adding, 'Hasten now to your lodgings, for the king will soon be coming to worship Me.' 174. As soon as Bhanudas had stepped outside, the padlock

returned again to its place on the door. Thus the god had met His *bhakta* without anyone having the least knowledge of it.

BHANUDAS CHARGED WITH THEFT

175. The king arose early, performed immediately his bath, and lovingly bowing to the god, waved before Him the burning wick-lights. 176. Suddenly he missed the string of jewels on the god's neck. The king enquired at once of the officiating priests. 'What thief has been here?' he demanded, and he flew into a rage. 177. He gave them a severe beating and cried out, 'Bring back at once the string of jewels. If you cannot produce those priceless jewels you must search for them the whole world over.' 178. No sooner was this order given than a house to house search was made but nowhere could the string of jewels be found. Then they began to look for thieves outside the city. 179. And lo! there sat Bhanudas on the bank of the Ganga river. He had had his bath and was repeating the names of God. The king's officers looked attentively at him and spied from afar the string of jewels on his neck. 180. 'We have found the thief,' they shouted, 'let us seize him.' The king's servants at once bound the noble *Vaishnava* and carried him along. 181. As he was brought into the city every one laughed as they saw him, and mocking him said, 'This fellow is wandering about in the guise of a saint in order to deceive the people. 182. Look! He has placed violent hands on a god. Is he likely to have any fear of man? If a butcher met even the cow *Kapila* (a cow with a black skin supposed to be very sacred), would he so much as think of worshipping her?'

DERISION OF BHANUDAS

183. Thus many kinds and classes of men derided Bhanudas as they saw him being carried along. But

Bhanudas showed no sign of being troubled thereby and continued repeating the names of God. 184. One observer reminded the crowd of a proverb, 'A garland of the sacred *tulsi* around the neck of a highway robber,' adding, 'our eyes have seen the truth of this proverb to-day. This man is evidently the one who stole the string of jewels.' 185. The officers now took the string of nine jewels and brought it to the king exclaiming, 'We have bound the thief and brought him to you. What punishment is to be given him?' 186. In a great rage the king cried out, 'Impale him at once!' But in so ordering he did it without taking thought that he ought to find out who the man was and what kind of a thief he was. 187. Bhanudas said to the officers, 'My death is at hand. Allow me therefore in these my last moments to see and worship Pandurang.' 188. There were some good men among these officers and they paid respect to Bhanudas' request. Obtaining the king's permission they took Bhanudas to the temple. 189. Bhanudas said to the god, 'Evidently it is because I came to take You away secretly that You have devised this plan to have me punished by the king. So be it! 190. Deprive of life whoever comes here to take You away, and enjoying wanton pleasures in this place of the king, remain happily here! 191. Was it with this thought in mind, O dark-complexioned One, that You put the string of jewels around my neck? And yet as You talked with me tears flowed from Your eyes. 192. Be it so, and yet to the end of my hundred thousand births I will never leave you, O Husband of Rukmini.' And with these words he lovingly made an obeisance to the god. 193. The officers now cried, 'Get up! Hustle! If to begin with, you had not committed this theft, nothing of this kind would have taken place.' 194. With these words the officers dragged Bhanudas outside the temple. They placed the impaling stake on his shoulder and applied *shendur* to his forehead. 195. Numberless men

and women assembled to see the unusual spectacle. They led Bhanudas outside the city and hastened to fasten the sharp stake in the ground.

BHANUDAS VINDICATED

196. As they were about to lift him up on to it to impale him Bhanudas thus supplicated God, 'Let the very heavens fall crashing upon me, yet will I remember Thee. 197. Though the seven oceans should unite and overwhelm me, still I will not leave Thee, O God, my King. I wave as an offering before Thee this destructible body of mine. 198. Though the whole earth should go to destruction, and the five elements be dissolved, yet aside from Thee, O Husband of Rukmini, I need no one at my side. 199. When the submarine fire shall devour the three worlds, Thou wilt be my beloved still.' The Life of the world seeing the determination of Bhanudas came to his rescue. 200. A most wonderful, a most strange marvel, now took place. Listen ye *bhaktas*, with reverence, to what now happened. The impaling stake, fastened in the ground, suddenly burst into leaf. 201. It blossomed into flower and fruit. The officers of the king went and told him what had taken place, adding, 'He is a *Vaishnava bhakta*. Pandharinath has come to his rescue. 202. The impaling stake has turned into a green tree.' The king listened to the story told by his servants of what had taken place, and expressed his great astonishment. 203. He hastened to the scene and saw the tree with his own eyes, Remorse now seized his heart and he cried out, 'I have committed a great wrong.' 204. The king then made Bhanudas an obeisance in love and reverence and said, 'From lack of thought I have done you this wrong.' 205. Without any delay the king took Bhanudas to the temple, and as he saw the image of Pandurang he became choked with emotion. 206. As Bhanudas embraced His feet the Life of the world raised him up and embraced him.

VITHOBA REINSTALLED AT PANDHARPUR

The Husband of Rukmini said to Bhanudas, ' You have suffered much because of me. 207. Take me up now on your shoulder and carry me to Pandharpur. There at the door of Pundalik's shrine I will dwell for ever.' 208. Ram Raja now clasped the feet of the god and cried, ' Are You leaving me, and going away ?' The god replied, ' You have committed a wrong, though unintentionally it is true. 209. You had performed some good deeds (in your former births) and therefore I remained here with you for these many days. But I must go now. Henceforth keep My form in remembrance in your heart with love. ' 210. Bhanudas now said to the Husband of Rukmini, ' How am I able to lift and carry You ? Moreover I have not the kingly power to collect many men to bear You.' 211. The Merciful to the humble replied, ' I am entirely at your service. All My powers are now yours, My *bhakta*.' 212. With this the Life of the world assumed a diminutive form and said to Bhanudas, ' Put me in your deer-skin bag, and take me along.' 213. Bhanudas went at once for his bag and placed *Chakrapani* (Holder of the disk, Krishna) inside.

BHANUDAS CARRIES VITHOBA TO PANDHARPUR

Now, let no one who hears this story have doubts about it. 214. For example, space is of infinite expanse, yet as you look into a jar the space there is only as large as the jar. So the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) in love to please His *bhakta* became small in size. 215. Or again, there are many great currents of air, but if one uses a fan one makes a current of air of the same nature as the others. So the Husband of Rukmini of His own free will became subject to His *bhakta*. 216. Back in the time when Krishna was an *avatar*, as Yashoda was churning, her hand grasped him in the vessel, the same who now entered the little bag of Bhanudas. Why then should one doubt

this story? 217. To one who looks with the eye of knowledge, He appears to pervade infinite spaces great and small, even smaller than an atom. 218. So the Lord of the world, out of affection for Bhanudas, fitted Himself to the space of the deer-skin bag, and Bhanudas carrying it on his shoulder hastened on his return journey. 219. From out of this bag the Life of the world spoke sweet words to his *bhakta*: 'Blessed is this day, for in it we shall meet the saints and the other good people.'

BHANUDAS AT LAKE PADMALAYA

220. When Bhanudas arrived at the Padmalaya lake (near Pandharpur) he placed the Pervader of the world on the ground, and with joy in his heart began his bath. 221. Suddenly the Husband of Rukmini in the skin-bag became great in size, the upper part was on His head and the lower part was smashed to pieces. 222. When Bhanudas returned (from his bath) and saw what had happened he exclaimed, 'God supreme! What is this that You have done! You have become big again. How shall I now be able to lift You?' 223. The Husband of Rukmini replied, 'Go on at once and inform the saints and *sadhus*. They will come to welcome me back with loud music of many instruments. 224. And let them place me on My throne in an auspicious hour this very day.' In accordance with these words of *Chakrapani* (Holder of the disk, Krishna), Bhanudas started on his way.

VITHOBA'S PROCESSION

225. Now by the eagle-platform all the *Vaishnava bhaktas* were sitting, oppressed with concern. 'Bhanudas has been gone for many days,' they exclaimed, 'but the Husband of Rukmini has not come back.' 226. Just then suddenly they saw coming the victorious *bhakta*, with his smiling face, calling out, 'I have brought back the Recliner on the Serpent Shesha (Vithoba)'. 227. Bhanudas embraced

the saints and said to them, 'The Husband of Rukmini has come as far as the Padmalaya lake.' Hearing this joyful news all were delighted. 228. Then with banners and flags the noble *Vaishnavas* went out (to welcome back the god) accompanied by the music of countless cymbals and drums. 229. Priests, leaders, men and women, joined the procession (to welcome the god back). Arriving at the Padmalaya lake they beheld the dark-complexioned One. 230. All prostrated themselves on the ground and then after embracing the god they put Him, the Husband of Rukmini, on a chariot and carried Him along in an enthusiastic procession. 231. The saints loudly proclaimed His praise. Dancers danced wildly before Him. Drums and other musical instruments sounded aloud and all felt joy. 232. In describing that occasion there are no comparisons that are sufficient, and yet in that month of *Kartik* (November) the *Warkaris* (pilgrims) saw that sight with their own eyes. 233. When at full moon a chariot procession takes place, that procession is the nearest comparison that can be made. It was then that Pandharinath thus passed along in pompous procession. 234. When the procession arrived at the bank of the Chandrabhaga, the leaders among them came forward, bathed the god and then all started on their way to the great door of the temple. 235. They took the dark coloured idol from off the chariot and passing it from hand to hand placed it in a palanquin. They carried it along to the temple and there anointed it with the special ceremonies for a welcome back. 236. Brahmans repeated *mantras* aloud. *Vaishnavas* sang lustily His praises. The Pervader of the universe sat now on His throne. Blessed was this happy day ! 237. With garments, ornaments, adornments and the sixteen rites they worshipped Him. Offering Him dainty food and other offerings they invoked His blessing. 238. Priests made offerings of handfuls of flowers to the

god, with loud repetitions of *mantras*. Saints, *Vaishnavas* and the pilgrims, all felt the joy of the occasion.

BHANUDAS APPLAUDED

239. And now the assembled crowd of men and women praised Bhanudas saying that it was through Him that the Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven) had come back to Pandhari. 240. Some distributed sweetmeats throughout the city. Others gave feasts of daintily cooked food to Brahmins. Thus all the dwellers of that sacred city rejoiced in heart. 241. Just as when Raghunandan (Rama) came back to Ayodhya after enduring fourteen years of exile the people of the city rejoiced, so the people rejoiced in the same way. 242. As when a mountain becomes dry in a time of drought, and rejoices when a cloud pours abundant rain upon it, so all the people of Pandhari rejoiced. 243. It was as when the clouds rejoiced that they saw the ocean issuing from the stomach of *Rishi* Agasti. 244. It was as when the Spring comes and all vegetation appears beautiful. So was it at the return of the Protector of the helpless to Pandhari. All the inhabitants were happy. 245. It was as when life returns to the body and all the senses are quickened and begin to perform their functions. So it happened to all the people of Pandhari.

246. As one listens to the interesting story in the next chapter he will gain faultless victory. Therefore, O *bhaktas*, peacefully gain it for yourselves. 247. As the glorious Husband of Rukmini increases the glory of His good saints, so His slave, Mahipati, sings of their noble qualities.

248. *Svasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. The Lord of the world will be pleased in listening to it. Listen, then, you God-loving pious *bhaktas*. This is the forty-third very delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE STORY OF BAHIRAMBHAT

*Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Slayer of
the Kaliya.*

MORAL EFFECTS OF THE STORIES OF THE SAINTS

1. Today among all the sense organs the tongue appears to be holy on account of good deeds performed by it. For in describing the good deeds and character of the *bhaktas* of Vishnu all sins flee away. 2. Bringing into one's imagination the appearance of the saints the very eyes are purified. By merely listening to the saints, the ears are purified without any further strenuous effort. 3. By going to listen to the stories of the saints the feet become holy. And thus in resisting laziness, and sitting listening, the whole body becomes purified. 4. In making a *namaskar* to this book the hands become purified. Touching it with the head, egotism quickly leaves one. 5. Bowing to the stories of the saints, the thought of one's self is lost, and the mind, coming to the state of quietness, enjoys peace. 6. Therefore fortunate hearers should hold in their hearts intense desire to listen.

BAHIRAMBHAT REPENTS AT HIS WIFE'S TAUNT

In the previous chapter you listened to an intensely interesting story, 7. how Bhanudas went to Vidyanagar in his state of love and by pleading with the god he brought back the idol of Pandurang and reinstalled it at Pandhari. 8. Listen to another most interesting story. Bahirambhat lived at Pratishtan (modern Paithan). He was a learned *pandit* in the six systems of philosophy, and skilled in the knowledge of *Vedanta*. 9. Brahmins who read the *Vedas* called themselves his pupils. A number of Brahmins associated themselves with him and studied the

stories of the *Puranas*. 10. Although he was so great a personage, he would never go to visit the king. At his own home he maintained a perpetual sacred fire, performed many holy deeds, and had no sorrow in his heart. 11. Without any desire to ask anything of anyone, the Brahman carried on the occupation of an ordinary Brahman. Bathing on the banks of the Godavari river he performed there his austerities. 12. Then arising in the middle of the day Bahirambhat was accustomed to return to his home. After making his offering to fire and the gods he used to invite noble Brahmans to dine with him. 13. After the dinner was over at the third watch of the day he would read aloud the *Puranas*. Wise people who were learned in the philosophy of the *Vedanta* would come there to listen. 14. One day while sitting eating he playfully referred to his wife saying that she had served vegetables without salt. His wife heard him say this 15. and replied to him, 'You are now sixty years of age. Why do you wish for a keen sense of taste on your tongue?' 16. Hearing these words of his wife he felt repentant. He said to himself, 'Why should I pass my life in vain? I must make it fruitful.' 17. Bahirambhat at once arose and made a *namaskar* to his wife. He said to her, 'Mother you have given me a valuable instruction in your love. 18. All the good deeds which I performed in a former birth have surely now come to their fruitage. Therefore through the instrument of words I have become possessed of strenuous indifference to worldly things.' 19. Bahirambhat thought to himself, 'If now I go straightaway into the forest, they will bring me back through the influence of others. 20. Still I must plan that my relations with my own caste should suddenly break so that no one should question me.' Such were his thoughts. 21. 'If I should now become a *Sannyasi*, all the Brahmans will worship me. If I enter into the highest stage of the order they

will still pay honour to me as one absorbed in the eternal *Brahma*. 22. Those who are in the highest positions, however, seeing me thus, will spit upon me. Evil men will seek to dishonour me. This is what ought to follow on such an occasion. 23. By this happening to me, my body will become pure.' Holding such repentance in his heart, he went away from his home.

HE BECOMES A MUHAMMADAN

24. Bahirambhat then went to the house of a *Kazi* (Muhammadan priest) and he spoke very humbly to him saying, 'Take me into your caste. 25. Your *Shastras* speak of making a Hindu into a Muhammadan as a holy thing to do. Therefore do not hesitate and make me like yourself.' 26. The *Kazi* (Muhammadan priest) replied, 'Why have you become indifferent to-day? Why have you a sudden change of mind? I will help you out of difficulty. 27. You are a learned *pandit*. Why do you wish to come into our caste? If you have any desire in your heart, I will supply it.' 28. Bahirambhat replied, 'I have not become one indifferent to desire, but your way seems to be to concentrate on acquiring God.' 29. Seeing his determination, he defiled Bahirambhat (i. e., received him into his caste). When Brahmans heard of this, all were full of sorrow. 30. Seeing there was no remedy for it, however, they finally settled down quietly. There were some evil thinkers at Paithan who reviled him when seeing him. 31. Some said, 'There is an evil thought in his indifference.' Some said, 'He is possessed of demons' Others said, 'If we so much as take his name all our good deeds will vanish.' 32. Still another said, 'His wife ought not to have spoken to him in the way she did.' Others said, 'Her luck appears to be unfavourable.' 33. Some said, 'He has a cruel heart. Our wives too speak to us in the same way, and a great deal

too, but the idea of indifference to worldly things does not come into our mind.' 34. Some exclaimed, 'When he had acquired wealth to secure the welfare of his family; it was easy for him to think of indifference to worldly things.' Thus people spoke to one another. 35. Others said, 'He was learned in the *Shastras* and he ought to have become a *Sannyasi*. Yet he has entered into the low caste and become a Muhammadan.' 36. Others said, 'In performing his religious acts he may have made a slip in his repetition of *mantras*.' Others rebukingly said, without thinking, 'Why are you needlessly reviling him?' 37. If one has knowledge, adult age, good family line, abundance of wealth and property, a son and wife, it is impossible for him to become indifferent to worldly things.' 38. In this way some of the people of Paithan reviled and some praised him. But Bahirambhat, repentant, always lived without fear.

BAHIRAMBHAT A BRAHMAN AGAIN

39. On a certain day, however, the Brahmans were seated on the banks of the Godavari river. He went to them and in repentance began to cry. 40. His throat choked with emotion and tears of joy flowed from his eyes. Seeing him thus, the Brahmans questioned him. 41. They said to Bahirambhat, 'For what purpose did you become a Muhammadan? What good qualities did you find amongst them, that you should cast us aside?' 42. When the Brahmans said this to him, he replied, 'My *kirma* (fate) was very powerful, therefore I fell into this thoughtless action. 43. In order to attain God, I of my own will became a Muhammadan. But I do not see there any way of obtaining knowledge of the soul.' 44. The Brahmans replied to him, 'One's deliverance is in one's good deeds.' Saying this to him, they consulted among themselves. 45. He was a wise and good man. He became

defiled because of his *kurma* (fate). So now giving him a penance according to prescribed rules, let us again bring Brahmanhood to him. 46. The inhabitants of other cities come here to question us regarding the laws of the *shastras*. And now why should we hesitate regarding the decision to make him pure? 47. After the sewage of villages has united with the Ganges, it becomes pure. Then if the water of the Ganges itself spreads outside, will it be called filthy? 48. If one belonging to another town has been defiled in another caste, he becomes pure by coming to Pratishtan (modern Paithan), then why drive away any good man belonging to this place? If we do so, we shall be reproached.' 49. Examining the *shastras*, they at once gave him penance. Spending an enormous amount of money, the Brahmins made him pure. 50. Now all the Brahmins assembled and said to Bahirambhat, 'Because of your good deeds in a former birth, you will have a sight of Shri Hari.'

BAHIRAMBHAT'S ARGUMENTS

51. Then all the Muhammadans assembled and said to the Brahmins, 'You have turned a Muhammadan into a Brahman. Come and tell the king how you did it.' 52. Bahirambhat said to them, 'How is it you made me a Muhammadan? See now the marks of piercing still appear in my ears. I am doubtful about your assertions. 53. If a man sees, how can anyone call him blind? When a man has the strength to walk, no one should call him a cripple. 54. If one has pride, it is of no use to describe him as having been delivered from earthly bondage. When one can listen by his ears, he should not be called a deaf man. 55. When sugar is mixed with intoxicating liquor, its sweetness does not go, so though you may have defiled me, still marks of piercing by ear-rings remain. 56. I have these marks in my ear and

while so, you still call me one without marks (a Muhammadan). And you are not ashamed of this.' In this way he discussed the matter with the Muhammadans. As the talk was going on all became wearied. 57. He then said to the Brahmans, 'Listen to my words; you gave me a penance and made me a Brahman again. What your law books on this subject are I do not know. 58. As the foreskin which they cut (or circumcised) has not come back through the penance I have taken, how is it I have become pure by applying to it cowdung and holy ashes ? 59. If the nose is cut off, who will respect that person ? So these Muhammadans having defiled me, my Brahmanhood no longer remains. 60. The full moon makes the moon bright but the dark spots on it still remain. So although you have purified me by penance, still the stain of defilement remains. 61. If the barber lets the tuft of hair remain it will grow; but the (circumcised) foreskin does not come back again. This doubt in my mind is always present with me. 62. Therefore, I am not altogether a Brahman, and you cannot call me a Muhammadan. I cannot be regarded as of either caste. 63. As the potter places on his wheel a lump of mud, it is not a jar or mere earth. So it has happened to me.'

BRAHMANS SILENCED

64. Having listened to his words, the Brahmans remained silent. They remarked, 'How shall we be able to remove his doubts ?' 65. If he met any wise man anywhere, he asked him to tell him who he was, and having put to him that question he went on. 66. If people said he was a Muhammadan he would become angry and would say to them, 'You do not know the facts, and in vain you try to delude me. 67. If I were truly a Muhammadan then why are my ears still pierced ? Without knowing anything you try to delude me. You speak out of your foolish-

ness.' 68. If anyone said that Bahirambhat was a great Brahman of Pratishtan (modern Paithan) he scolded him saying, 69. 'You call me a Brahman. If so, why is the sign of circumcision still there?' He showed it to them and all wondered. 70. As he thus questioned every one he met, he got the name of 'Crazy Bahira.' He said to himself, 'When shall I meet with a *sadguru* who will remove the impression of my doubt?' 71. Thus wandering about for many days, he came to the town of Vadaval. Here Nagnath the spiritual expert lived in the hermitage of his *sadguru*. 72. He was building a great tomb for his *Swami*. He used in the work some carts made of *Sharada* wood, and placing on them stones as big as mountains he hitched monkeys to them in order to draw them.

NAGNATH REMOVES CRAZY BAHIRA'S DOUBTS

73. When Crazy Bahira saw this with his eyes, he was astonished and said to himself, 'I am sure he will remove my doubt, and bring steadiness to my mind.' Bahirambhat now said to Nagnath, 74. 'Tell me plainly Am I a Hindu or a Muhammadan?' Hearing this seemingly impudent speech, the *Sadguru* grew angry. 75. He had his staff in his hand and he at once struck him on his head. Bahirambhat immediately fainted and fell on to the ground. 76. He could remember nothing. His very life seemed to have disappeared. He had no consciousness of who he was. There was no more life in his body. 77. Nagnath having done this he said to himself, 'I must entirely remove his misunderstanding. I must remove his doubt and put him on the way of understanding himself.' 78. He had a pestle brought by the hands of his disciples, and had his body pounded by them. Then having thus pounded his bones and flesh together, he made a lump of them with his hands. 79. He then made

of it an image and with his own hands cremated it. All who looked at the strange doing were full of astonishment. 80. When the fire was out, Nagnath did a seemingly impossible thing. He looked upon it with an eye of compassion. A living force entered into it. 81. It was a divine body with all good qualities, such as *Yogis* enjoy and then sit contemplating the divine essence. Such a form Nagnath now saw. He felt great joy at heart. 82. The *Sadguru* then asked him who he was. 'Bahirambhat, listen to my words. Tell me quickly who you are.' 83. Hearing this question, he thought for a while and then said, 'Doubts have now disappeared.' Saying this he remained silent. 84. 'If I call myself a Muhammadan, yet my foreskin is already there; if I say I am a Brahman my ears look as if already pierced.' 85. *Sadgurus* teach the knowledge of philosophy, but who can change the body? Nagnath did that which was seemingly impossible and removed his great doubt.

BAHIRAMBHAT OBTAINS SOUL KNOWLEDGE

86. Nagnath placed his hand upon Bahirambhat's head and gave him the instruction needed to make him his disciple. He became at once a knower of soul and set himself to the worship of *Hari*. 87. Bahirambhat full of joy exclaimed, 'Blessed is the *sadguru* Nagnath. He has given me another birth without a moment's delay. 88. There are a great many *gurus* with the knowledge of the soul who can remove births and deaths; but they certainly cannot change the body, for the action of *karma* cannot be resisted. 89. Bringing the image of Pandurang into their minds, a great number of *bhaktas* worship him. Namdev caused the stone idol to eat and this seems most strange. 90. Everywhere the people speak of the illusory nature of *Maya*, and in distress they show themselves very brave. But Kabir killed his son and this seems most

strange. 91. Old men can teach young men knowledge in many forms of the *Vedas* and the *Shastras*, but in causing a buffalo to repeat the *Vedas* Dnyandev did a most wonderful thing. 92. Blessed is Savata the noble *bhakta* who when Pandharinath came to him to be hidden, with his own hand he ripped himself open and hid Him in his heart. 93. Thus the God-loving *bhaktas* of Vishnu seemed to be greater one after the other. No one understands properly their glory by which Krishna, who is dark as a cloud, is made subservient to them.'

94. Going now back to the story. Nagnath manifested his mercy and Bahiramhat arrived at an understanding of his soul. 95. Then going at once to Pandhari he looked upon the *sagun* form of Krishna. Full of love he danced with love in the *kirtans*. 96. It was the same Bahiramhat who made a Marathi commentary on the tenth *Skandh* of the *Shri Bhugavata*, and pious men listening to those loving and priceless verses become happy. 97. Bahiramhat finally composed many *padas* and other poems and the moment one listens to them, sins flee away. 98. Listening to the fame of God's *bhaktas*, all the dull-minded become purified. Mahipati therefore pleads with his hearers to listen with love.

99. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the forty-fourth very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XLV

EKNATH

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Son of Devaki.

SALVATION THROUGH LISTENING TO THESE STORIES

1. Listen now, O hearers, to the following delightful story. As one listens all the sorrows of this earthly life disappear, full reason is impressed on one's heart, and peace and joy are within one's reach. 2. Without performing any of the means of the *Yogis*, without having to go wandering to bathing-places, if anyone gives his mind to listening to the stories of the saints, he can obtain *Vaikunth* (heaven). 3. Although one may not have much knowledge of the *Shastras*, and though the condition of being indifferent to worldly things does not come to his body, still in giving his love to the singing of the praises of Hari, he is purified immediately. 4. Those who cannot perform the regular religious duties, those who cannot keep in restraint the tongue's desire, even they, remembering and repeating the name of Rama, become as God Himself. 5. Those who are naturally misers and whose affection for their families has especially increased, even those, if they listen to these stories of the saints, turn to repentance. 6. Just as a bar of iron that has become rusty changes the moment it touches the *paris* (touchstone), so the moment there is a taste for the stories of the *bhaktas* the ignorant are visited with sound reason. 7. If one has a store of former good deeds, then only will he have a delight in these stories. But other poor fellows, who are without good deeds laid up in former births, they are hindered in every way by wrong thoughts. 8. Therefore you God-loving, pious people, you seem to me to be immensely fortunate. Like royal swans you enjoy the delightful stories (of the saints).

THE BIRTH OF EKNATH

9. In a previous chapter (43) hearers have listened to the supremely purifying and beautiful story of how Bhanudas brought back to Pandhari the image of Pandurang. 10. The son of Bhanudas of noble qualities was named Chakrapani. He was a supremely pious and wise *Vaishnava*, always engaged in the worship of Hari. 11. His son was Suryanarayan who shone by the glorious light of his knowledge. His beautiful wife was named Rukmini. 12. She gave birth to a son and his name was Eknath. He was in fact a world-guru. Listen to his history. 13. Day by day he grew and was soon invested with the sacred thread. His mother and father were exceedingly devoted to him.

EKNATH VISITS JANARDAN

14. There was one there by name of Janardanpant, an exceedingly wise man. He was accustomed to have a manifestation of the god Dattatreya. It happened on a certain day that Eknath went to visit him. 15. Placing his garments on his head, he went and with reverence bowed to him. When Janardanpant saw him at that time he was much astonished. 16. He said to Eknath, 'To whom do you belong? Why have you come here?' So Janardan addressed him and asked him for his history. 17. 'You have evidently sulked and leaving your mother and father have come here to me. You must tell me the truth without any hesitation of mind.' 18. Then joining his hands together palm to palm, Eknath replied very humbly. He said, 'I am a *Rigvedi* Brahman's son. I have come here to see you. 19. I am not irritated against my mother or father, but I felt a sense of repentance in my heart. But the love of this earthly life has become part of me. My mind is in trouble by lust and anger. 20. I constantly see in me the love of things, desires, hypocrisy and pride. Therefore I have come to see you with a sense of love. 21. Now my

only desire is that I may always remain with you, and that I may serve you day and night with reverence and delight. 22. I am a sinner and have come to you as a suppliant. O mother *Sadguru*, receive me.' Thus speaking he grasped Janardan's feet with reverence. 23. Listening to these words of Eknath, Janardan was much astonished. He said to himself, 'He seems to be small of age, but his great knowledge seems beyond comparison.'

EKNATH'S SERVICE OF JANARDAN

24. Janardan then gave him his assurance that he should not fear. He said to him, 'You may remain with me with great pleasure.' Hearing these words of Janardan, Eknath felt great joy in his heart. 25. Just as Vyas, when he fell in deep doubt, felt happy at the sight of Narad Muni, so by the assurance of Janardan, Eknath's mind was pleased; 26. or as when Brahmadev met God in the form of a swan he felt a sense of peace, so by the assurance of Janardan the heart of Eknath rejoiced. 27. He continued constantly in the service of his *Swami*. He was alert for his service day and night. He left nothing lacking. He held his *guru* in high reverence. 28. When Janardan at night went to retire, with his own hands Eknath sat massaging his feet. And when he fell into sleep he would not arise from his place. 29. Collecting together all the materials for the *pansupari* and with his own hands putting them into shape, he would make the request to Janardan and with love put it into his mouth. 30. In order to rinse out his mouth he would bring and place a spittoon before him. With his own hands he would help him to bathe and give him the materials for worship. 31. Whenever Janardan asked for perfume, rice, flowers, and sandalwood paste, light and incense, he would immediately bring them to him. 32. Whatever Janardan left on his plate Eknath ate with great love. Thus he

served him for many days, always doing it with love 33. At night Janardan had a cough and bile and he spat into the spittoon. Eknath used to take it away and privately drink it with love. 34. With his own hand he used to make clean the place to which Janardan used to retire. So Eknath gave himself up always to the *bhakti* of his *guru*.

JANARDAN'S ESTIMATION OF EKNATH

35. Janardan seeing this was much astonished. He said, 'One should not call Eknath a man. He is superior to all the *bhaktas* who follow a *guru*.' 36. Seeing him sitting by himself one day Janardan graciously asked him, 'You are serving me here without your father and mother knowing of it. 37. You seem as one indifferent to all earthly things. At your home, however, they are in need of garments and food. Both your parents are aged and both are deeply concerned for you.' 38. Knowing this Janardan used to send to their house garments and food. When the parents heard the news of their son they were comforted.

EKNATH AS A BOOK-KEEPER

39. Janardan then thought to himself, 'I must give him some special service.' He then requested Eknath to keep his accounts in the account book. 40. If you are efficient in this you will learn all kinds of knowledge.' Assenting to this he made his bow and said, '*Swami*, your command is my authority.' 41. So without any failure in his service he always kept his accounts. Janardan said to himself, 'He is an exceedingly clever boy. I understand him now. 42. So by some means I must turn his mind to divine knowledge.' So he called Eknath to him and said to him, 'Show me your accounts. 43. Look over your day-book and ledger and then show me the account.' Saying that he would do

so he embraced his feet. 44. After having completed his regular service, at night he filled the lamp with oil. He then found that he had made an error of one pice and he sat and attempted to find it. 45. But he could not find the error. The account would not balance. Then concentrating his mind upon it, he sat hunting through and through the account. 46. He did not sleep even for a moment, nor even consider the weariness of his body. Although he was extremely thirsty, he would not drink any water. 47. He said to himself, 'If I should partake of some food and drink water, then I shall feel sleepy and feel lazy. Then what shall I say to my *guru*?' Thus he thought to himself. 48. When Janardan awoke and looked all round, he did not see Eknath and was much astonished thereby. 49. He hunted for him, and in another room Eknath sat looking over the account to find out the missing one pice and was constantly adding oil to his lamp.

JOY AT MISTAKE FOUND OUT

50. Just then the account balanced and Eknath was full of joy. He clapped his hands together without anyone being near him. 51. Janardan stood there looking at the amusing sight. He then came up in front of him and asked him. 52. The *sadguru* said to Eknath, 'What is the wonderful thing which makes you rejoice and laugh?' 53. As he heard these words he looked up and then immediately standing he bowed to him with reverence. 54. He said, 'As I was looking over the account I found an error of one pice, and having just now balanced the account I am very happy in my mind and' 55. I laughed.' Hearing these words Janardan was full of astonishment. 56. The *sadguru* then said to Eknath, 'Just as your mind was fastened on the pice, so if it is absorbed in the feet of Shri Krishna then you will arrive at your own good.' 57. Hearing these words of his *guru* he immediately felt repentant

at heart. He replied, 'This was the very desire I have had—give me your command, O *Swami*.'

EKNATH'S BLESSED DAY

58. 'Blessed is this day. I have received your instructions through your graciousness. You have separated me from the evils of *maya* and wiped away my desires for this earthly existence.' 59. Then taking his pen he placed it at the feet of his *sadguru*. He then explained the way in which he had written his account. Let good people listen to it in love. 60. 'This human body is as it were the principal of the current year. During the last year was the result of a former act. The page of love is in one's heart. A great deal was expended in performing one's duty. 61. Having rejected all idea of fruit as a reward, I am brought near to my *Swami*, and without my knowing it will be offered to God. 62. I have submitted this interesting account of my regular service. It bears the signature of the *sadguru* and that shows the account is rightly balanced. 63. And now bringing forth for clearance this human body its balance as ignorance is acquired, and have devoted myself to your feet gladly turning from all business relations. 64. You are the *Swami* of the three worlds. My business relations have been with you. I am now delighted with the name of Krishna through your grace. 65. *Soham* (I am He) has been given me by you and I bow to it with my head. I have received an unlimited amount of garments of love. 66. I have received the *pansupari* of *mukti*. With it all the distress of the diseases of this earthly existence have been turned away. Then going to the city of final absorption I occupied the bastion of the supreme Spirit. 67. I have submitted at last to my *Swami* the revenue in the form of my experience. By the association of the good I have been able to

collect the revenue in arrears, and so I have received the receipt of *bhakti*. 68. I must have done some good deeds in a former birth, when I started in with this business of the name of Rama.' Saying these things to Janardan he bowed prostrate at his feet.

EKNATH AS JANARDAN'S DISCIPLE

69. Janardan hearing him say this was astonished. He said to himself, 'I see that he has the authority to receive instruction for making him my disciple.' 70. Then raising Eknath up, Janardan embraced him with graciousness. He taught him the saving *mantra* of 'Rama Krishna.' 71. Placing all his faith in this he obtained the sacred means for the supreme spiritual riches. Then in his love in the *kirtans* he sang of the good deeds of Hari. 72. After the gracious deeds of his *sadguru* there was no lack in his service to him. Day by day he became more and more devoted. 73. Seeing his determination Janardan said to himself, 'Who can call him a man? In order to save the universe he is the complete *avatar* of Vishnu.'

JANARDAN THINKS TO MEET EKNATH WITH DATTATREYA

74. After this Janardan looking with an eye of compassion, thought of giving Eknath a sight of Shri Dattatreya and communicated his secret thought to Eknath. 75. Janardan said to Eknath, 'I will cause you to meet the god Shri Dattatreya. But let your mind be without fear when you see Him. You need not fear at all. 76. He appears in all sorts of forms. He now and then changes His form. He assumes just the very form at which the ignorant people revile. 77. But embrace the feet of the person with whom I shall talk. Then having embraced Him, hold the *Sadguru* to your heart. 78. If He gives any favour, eat it then and there with love.' As Janardan gave Eknath these instructions he grasped him by his feet. 79. Eknath replied to him, 'This has been my wish

for a long time. It has been in my mind but I did not wish to overstep the limit my *Swami* had set by speaking to him about it. 80. Now, however, with your own lips you have given me the assurance. So fulfil today my heart's desire and give me a manifestation of Dattatreya.' 81. Recognizing thus Eknath's earnest wish he took him into the jungle. Suddenly there the Son of Anusaya (the god Dattatreya) appeared to meet them. 82. Janardan then said to Eknath, 'Recognize now my *Swami*.'

DATTATREYA AS A MUHAMMADAN FAKIR

Suddenly a Muhammadan sitting upon a horse came there. 83. At such a form Eknath became frightened. He said, 'He seems to me to be a real Muhammadan. What you say to me seems to be untrue.' 84. He had a broad forehead and bloodshot eyes. In His hands were weapons. Riding upon a horse he came near to them and dismounted. Janardan then bowed to him. 85. In the language of the Muhammadans the son of Anusaya began to speak with Janardan. Eknath seeing this was full of astonishment. 86. The *sadguru* then said to Janardan, 'I am hungry; let us eat.' He then prepared various kinds of dainty foods and exhibited a wonderful sight. 87. In a jewelled golden plate six sweet juices were served. Janardan sat close to Him and the two dined together. 88. The *sadguru* then said to Janardan, 'I see a boy over there; call him here to eat with us, if you are so pleased.'

EKNATH DOUBTFUL

89. At this Eknath had a doubt in his mind and he said to himself, 'How can I eat the food of a Muhammadan?' So he ran away a good distance. 90. Just then Dattatreya became invisible and Eknath was astonished. Placing his head at the feet of his *sadguru* he questioned him with love. 91. He said to him, 'Who was that Muhammadan who came here in our midst?'

JANARDAN REMOVES EKNATH'S DOUBT

The other replied, ' You did not recognize Him by His characteristics. He was the Son of Atri (Dattatreya). 92. Although many means are devised, still no one is able to have a manifestation of Him. You met Him here without effort, and wrong thoughts came into your heart. 93. As an unfortunate man was going along the road he suddenly came upon a wish-tree, but he ran away from it, and so you have thought about Him. 94. Or as when a pearl should suddenly fall upon one's hand, and having no good fortune he should close his eyes, so it has happened to you. 95. If the ocean of nectar appeared, one could even strike the god of Death with a stick, but the Son of Anusaya cannot be seen by any common person. 96. Although sitting upon spikes is a difficult task, still even that can be easily accomplished, but a manifestation of Dattatreya does not occur to men, yet you had the opportunity without effort. 97. Secrets of human beings can be known even without their telling them, but the seemingly impossible thing is the sight of the Son of Atri, O Eknath. 98. By special effort you may be able to bathe in the seven oceans, but the sight of the *sadguru* can only happen through good fortune. 99. One does not know the future, yet for once one may know it; but it is not *any* one that Dattatreya comes to meet. 100. You had the opportunity of meeting Him without any effort and you needlessly had the doubt; but in the future there may be another opportunity of seeing Him, so be on your guard.'

EKNATH'S ARGUMENT

101. To this Eknath replied, ' I call myself your disciple, but if I try to fasten my mind on any other object, wrong thoughts arise in it. 102. Know that an infant is in the heart of its father; therefore a grandfather naturally loves his grandson; so if I hold my head at your feet,

Dattatreya will be pleased with me. 103. So long as a flower clings to the stem it will naturally receive the sap from the roots, so if I give my attention to you, Dattatreya will without effort on my part meet with me.' 104. Thus talking with his *sadguru* both hastened home.

MANIFESTATION OF DATTATREYA

On a certain day Janardan said to Eknath, 105. 'Let us go into the jungle today for your sake. Then I will cause Dattatreya to appear to you, though I do not know in what form He will appear.' 106. Saying this to him they went quickly into the jungle. There Dattatreya suddenly appeared in the form of a Muhammadan *Fakir*. 107. *Maya* (the primal force of the universe) had taken the form of his wife. The wish-cow appeared as a she-dog. Seeing this form Janardan rejoiced. 108. Going forward he made a *namaskar* and embracing him they talked to one another. 109. In the Muhammadan language the Son of Anusaya said to Janardan, 'I am very hungry, let us eat together at once.' 110. On producing an earthen vessel with His own hands he himself milked the she-dog. Crumbling the bread in the milk, the two sat together to eat. 111. The *sadguru* said to Janardan, 'Who is that whom I see over there? Invite him and bring him here to sit and eat with us.'

EKNATH'S HESITATION

112. Hearing these words Eknath felt hesitation. 'Why he seems clearly to be a *fakir*. How shall I do that which is not lawful?' 113. Janardan made signs to him, 'Now by the instructions I formerly gave you, you have now met that *sadguru*. Take His favour and go.' 114. But Eknath still hesitated in his mind. He came near to the *fakir* with fear. He said, 'I will not stay close to you, but give me at once the favour.' 115. Then Janardan in his love

gave him a mouthful of what was left. He (Eknath) bound it in his garment and then sat by himself. 116. As soon as the dining was over Dattatreya said to Janardan, ' Who is that boy over there ? Tell me. '

DATTATREYA'S BLESSING

117. Janardan then called Eknath and placed him at His *Swami's* feet. He gave him His blessing and spoke to him in words of promise. 118. ' This boy will explain clearly in Marathi the deep, secret meaning of the *Shri Bhagwat* which Vyas has written as the substance of the *Vedas* and the *Shastras*. 119. He will compose a delightful book as the *Bhavartha Ramayana*. In hearing it, all men will be saved. 120. He will also sing with love in his *kirtans* of the supremely wonderful deeds of the life of Shri Hari composed in many *padas*. These will save the sinner by merely being listened to.' 121. Giving him this promise he placed his hands of assurance upon his head. Then without a moment's delay He became invisible. 122. Janardan said to Eknath, ' You will now be satisfied with what has occurred today. Tell me where you have placed the favour which He gave you ? ' 123. Eknath said in reply, ' I threw away that morsel. ' Janardan then took the *pansupari* out of his mouth and with his own hand put it into Eknath's mouth. 124. Then taking Eknath by the hand they came home quickly. They did not forget each other, just as the mother does not forget her child. 125. A mother does not forget her infant ; the hearts of both bore witness to this. In that way both Eknath and Janardan were truly of one heart. 126. A lamp and its light, gold and its brilliancy, fluidity and water are without distinction. 127. The sun and its rays, moon and coolness, the wind and motion, between these there are no distinctions. 128. The ocean and its waves although different in appearance are but one, just as nectar and its sweet

juice live together. 129. Just as attentiveness and listening, or the earth and its solidity, spiritual philosophy and the quality of goodness are different in name only; 130. so Janardan and Eknath, though two different names still, did not forget one another. Like dear and near relatives they felt distressed at each other's absence.

JANARDAN SENDS EKNATH BACK HOME

131. It now happened on a certain day that Janardan after thinking over the matter said to himself, 'It does not seem right that I should now accept his service.' 132. Janardan then said to him, 'My command is your authority. Now go to Pratishtan (modern Paithan) and live there as a householder. 133. Show to the people by example the way of bathing, devotions, worship of God, worship of fire and so forth, how to worship uninvited guests and how to perform the regular and the occasional religious practices. 134. Though you may become skilled in the knowledge of the soul, never leave the doing of good deeds. After you have crossed over a river, why destroy the ferry boat on which you came? 135. Even if you feel in your mind that some duty of yours is not correct, still you must carry it out as a popular custom, then having done it according to prescribed rules, leave it to God. 136. If you accept these words as an authority you will make the Husband of Rukmini pleased with you.' Janardan then placed his hands upon Eknath's head and Eknath started quickly for Pratishtan. 137. The *sadguru's* words are full of authority and there is no superior means to that. Knowing that this is the secret of *guru-worship* he did what others could not have done.

EKNATH AS A HOUSEHOLDER

138. Then going to his home he bowed to his aged parents, who seeing their son felt great comfort. 139. Here he bathed and performed his devotions, his worship of God and the service of his mother and father. According to

the prescribed rules he began to live with his wife at the personal spring-time. 140. He made no request of anyone. He did not regard anyone as great or small. Whatever of animate or inanimate things he saw they all seemed to him to be Janardan. 141. There was an old idol of Pandurang at his home which he worshipped with love. As he was told to do in the scriptures so he worshipped it. 142. With reverence he offered to it many kinds of flowers, sandalwood paste and many fragrant substances, incense, light, the platter of lights and food. 143. With a handful of flowers and hymns of praise he used to go around the god, making to it a prostrate *namaskar*, and with repentance in his heart would plead for God's mercy. 144. 'Victory, victory to Thee, Purifier of the sinner, Saviour of the world, Dweller at Dwarka, Husband of Rukmini, Helper of the helpless, compassionate One, Lord of all, Pandurang. 145. I come as a suppliant to Thee with exclusive devotion. Therefore I bow before Thee.' Then taking with him a favour of *tulsi* leaves he drank the water in which the idol had been bathed. 146. Taking Brahmans into his dining line he used to dine with them in love. At the third watch he used to listen with reverence and good devotion to the reading of *Puranas*. 147. At night he started a *Harikirtan*. Pious people assembled to listen to it. Hearing the words of Eknath men and women became absorbed. 148. Through Janardan's favour he composed verses in a happy language. As saints and good people listened to them their minds felt great joy.

RAMA'S COMMAND TO COMPOSE MARATHI *RAMAYANA*

149. As Eknath was asleep one night Shri Raghunath (Rama) came to him in a dream and said to him, 150. 'The *Ramayana* composed by Valmiki is in Sanskrit and its deep meaning is not understood by people. Therefore make a commentary in Marathi and give its contents to

men.' 151. As soon as he saw this in his dream he became at once awake. Regarding that command as his authority he began the Marathi version of the *Ramayana*. 152. Choosing a favourable day he began to search the seven chapters. As he brought the meaning of it into his mind he became absorbed in it. 153. He thought to himself, 'The meaning of this is deep. How can I put it into Marathi? Still by the mercy of Janardan I will compose the book as best as I can.' 154. He began the *Bālkāṇḍ* [the chapter dealing with Rama's birth and childhood] and composed verses of praise in the first chapter. Worshipping the feet of Ganapati and Sarasvati he then praised the *sadguru*. 155. Praying to the saints and good people Eknath began his book. With good devotion he did the composition, therefore it was called the *Bhavartha Ramayana*. 156. Shri Raghunath (Rama) sitting upon his lips caused him rightly to compose the book. Eknath became a mere instrument which all His holy *bhaktas* know.

A REVILING NEIGHBOUR

157. There was, however, in the city a certain citizen who was always reviling him. He would remark, ' Why has Eknath made a Marathi commentary on the Sanskrit ? ' 158. There were other pious ones, lovers of God who called his poetry delightful. As soon as they listened to it all troubles of their hearts disappeared. 159. Now it happened one night when Eknath fell asleep that the Husband of Janaki (Rama) came to him in a dream and said to him, 160. ' Put aside your drowsiness and sit writing the *Ramayana*. I am fond of the delightful language spoken by your lips. ' 161. The Lord of Ayodhya got for him pen and paper. When he awoke he did not see Shri Rama. 162. Repeating the names of Raghunath (Rama) he sat writing the *Ramayana*. Just then a seem-

ingly impossible thing occurred. Listen to it with love, O good people. 163. While writing of Maruti going in search of Sita, Eknath lost all consciousness of body and he had no thought whatever of himself. 164. As he was writing the passage where Hanuman flew from the mountain Mahendra he experienced the same thing as Maruti. 165. With love in his heart Eknath started to fly. It was the middle of the night and he fell into the yard of a neighbour. 166. The citizen becoming awake looked into his yard and there he saw Eknath lying in a fainting condition. Seeing him thus he was full of astonishment. 167. Taking the page in his hand and reading it he understood what it all meant. He said to himself, 'It was with love that he began to fly.' 168. The citizen questioned him, 'How did you come here and fall to the ground?' He had no consciousness of body, therefore he did not speak. 169. Seeing this condition of Eknath his mind felt repentance. He said to himself, 'In vain I have reviled this *avatar* Eknath.' 170. Then taking Eknath on his back he placed him in his house. Eknath became awake in a moment and then continued writing.

REVILER INTENDS TO BECOME EKNATH'S DISCIPLE

171. The citizen made a *namaskar* to him and then went back home. There he determined that he would take instruction from Eknath and become his disciple. 172. When one sees an exceedingly wonderful miracle which creates reverence, that is not pure devotion; it is rightly called hypocrisy. 173. One knowingly makes a god of the *paris* (touchstone) and worships it in the shrine with the sixteen materials for worship; still such reverence on the part of a *bhakta* can only be called hypocrisy. 174. If one circumambulates the wish-cow after seeing the wonders performed by her, the pious and the God-loving *bhaktas* understand

the secret of this devotion. 175. After the wish-tree is recognized, those with desire give it water. If anyone calls them obliging, good men should not consider it as true. 176. So having first reviled the saints, and then having seen a miracle, reverence is aroused; still he must be called a hypocrite. There is nothing else that can be said. 177. When relatives have acquired wealth the evil-minded pay them respect. But remembering their past dishonour they do not feel well. 178. So this citizen, having first reviled and then having seen a miracle, came as a suppliant. Eknath remembering his past history, saw that it was hypocrisy.

EKNATH AND THE REVILER

179. One day Eknath was sitting in his house and that citizen came to him and made a request. 180. He said to him, 'O *Swami*, I did not know your power and therefore in vain did I revile you. And now with reverence in my heart I have come to your greatness. 181. Place now your hand upon my head and give me the instruction that will make me your disciple.' Eknath hearing what he said remained silent. 182. 'Not seeing in him authority to become a disciple, how can I make him a disciple? In a ground that can never bear fruit one should never sow seed. 183. One should not give his daughter in marriage to one whose family line has no place in the world. Seeing a broken jar, one should not fill it with water.' 184. Speaking thus to himself, Eknath gave the man the reply, 'After searching out some one worthy of you, have reverence for him.' 185. As he said this to him he would not listen at all. He said, 'I will take no instruction from anyone except from you.' With that he fell at his feet. 186. On account of his importunate urging Eknath outwardly said to him, 'Tomorrow is an auspicious day. Bathe first and then come to me.' 187. As the citizen arose and went home Eknath sat thinking over

the matter. He said to himself, 'I should not give instruction to a lazy man or a miser.' 188. The next day after having bathed Eknath came to the temple. He said to the people at his home, 'Do not place any water here for worship. 189. Although I might call for some one, let no one give me an answer.' Then making this resolve of his own he sat worshipping mentally.

THE REVILER TESTED

190. Just then the citizen having bathed came into the god-room. Here he saw Eknath sitting in contemplation, repeating the names of Krishna with his lips. 191. Eknath thought to himself, 'I must put him to a test. If he is really a hypocrite, I should not give him the instruction.' 192. Calling aloud to the people in his house he said, 'You have not placed here any water for worship. What is the reason for it today?' 193. Then he called out to them to bring it quickly. Still no one in the house gave him a reply. Then Eknath suddenly arose. 194. Taking a vessel in his hand he said, 'There is no one here to give me water.' So he went himself into the house and brought the water. 195. Thus testing the man, Eknath again sat worshipping the god. He said to himself, 'He is still a reviling and a lazy person, so I must not give him instruction to make him a disciple. 196. He who will not give God water that costs nothing, how will he later on do Him service? He who will not make a *namaskar* to an earth-god (Brahman), will not give him a meal of dainty food. 197. He who will not tell anyone the way, how can he give him a lodging in his house? He who will not give a seat to a guest, he will not bind a turban on his head. 198. So one who will not bring water that costs nothing, of what use will he be in the future?' With this thought in his mind he continued worshipping Shri Hari.

THE REVILER PROVED A HYPOCRITE

199. The citizen then said to him, 'Place your hand on my head.' Eknath said, 'The auspicious time has passed, and I do not see any time after that.' 200. Listening to what Eknath had to say, the citizen returned to his home and Eknath felt very satisfied in his heart. 201. He said to himself, 'Why do I want a disciple who is a hypocrite? It is necessary to discard all hindrances and worship the King of Pandhari. 202. What need has the infant son of Janardan for a band of disciples? I fear it will only make me proud.' 203. Thus filled with the spirit of indifference to earthly things Eknath continued to worship.

In the next chapter we shall hear of how the god Shri Krishna came from Dwarka and entered into Eknath's service personally. 204. The hearers who listen to that story will find it sweeter and sweeter. Then all the discomforts of the diseases of this earthly existence will at once flee away. 205. Mahipati again and again pleads with his hearers to give their ears to the story with love, and let their mind be attentive.

206. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the forty-fifth deeply delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLVI

SHRI KHANDYA THE BRAHMAN

*Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Slayer of demon
Dhenuka.*

THE STORY OF SHRI KHANDYA GIVES PEACE AND SALVATION

1. The sea of nectar has come with full tide today. One might speak of a treasure of divine knowledge as having been opened, or as the beautiful light of the sun having appeared in the heart of the hearers. 2. Or we may speak of the secret things of pure knowledge suddenly falling upon the ear, or of having obtained today through good fortune the seed that produces the highest form of salvation. 3. Or we might think of this as a chief *mantra*, a storehouse of blessing, as having come today by means of good fortune, or we may regard it as the thought of indifference to earthly things received in listening to the story of the *bhaktas* of God. 4. Or we may think of it as the happiness from peace, or as if there has sprung up a sprout of the vine of right thought, or as the joy of happiness appearing upon this round earth. 5. Or we may view this story of a saint as the desireless state of being indifferent to earthly things, or as creating love for all creatures, or as creating love and affection. 6. Or it may be called the home of final deliverance, or again the love of happiness from *kirtans*, or we might think of it as the appearance of a pure wish-tree, or it can be called an accomplishment without a desire.

* SHRI KRISHNA COMES IN THE FORM OF A BRAHMAN
TO EKNATH

7. In the preceding chapter Eknath tested the citizen

* For a version of the same story from the *Bhaktalilamrit* see No. 2 of the Poet-Saints of the Maharashtra Series, page 156.

and sent him home. He appeared black like brass does when placed in a furnace. 8. When gold is tested on the touchstone the lacquered one appears' as inferior. The expert then discards it as unacceptable to him. 9. The singing of a prostitute may be exceedingly beautiful, but those indifferent to earthly things do not give their minds to it. Holy men will not accept the yearly royal gifts. 10. A skilled housekeeper picks only one kernel and thus tests the whole boiling rice. So when Eknath asked the citizen for some water he recognized his laziness.

11. With the sixteen materials for worship Eknath continued to offer his offerings to God with feelings of reverence. He had nothing else to give, this the eagle-bannered One understood. 12. He thought to Himself, 'Eknath loves dearly to worship Me. His love for Me is great. So I will at once go to him and help him to accomplish his purpose.'

13. Thus speaking to Himself, the Lord of Dwarka took the form of a Brahman. This infinite One came to Pratihthan and questioned the people. 14. He who is the internal Witnesser, He who is a cloud of intelligence, Dweller in the universe and the Life of the world, He asked where the home of Eknath was, although in his own heart He knew where it was. 15. He said to the people, 'Show me the house of that noble *Vaishnava* who devotes himself with exceeding reverence to the worship of Shri Krishna and who continually gives feasts to Brahmans.' 16. The dark complexioned One having thus spoken, men and women pointed out to him Eknath's house into which He then entered and made him a *namaskar*.

KRISHNA A MENIAL

17. The Life of the world said to Eknath, 'I am a Brahman from another country and without protection.

Having heard that you are constantly giving food to Brahmans I have come here. 18. So give me garments and satisfy my hunger with food and I will then remain here constantly and do what you ask me to do without giving way to any laziness in my mind.' 19. Eknath then asked Him, 'Where is Your home? And who are You? Who is depending upon You? What is Your name?' 20. The Husband of Rukmini having listened to him said, 'I am entirely alone. I have no son, no wife, no property at all. 21. Having determined in my heart to serve you here devotedly and receive your favour, I have come here. 22. I have looked about me in many places, but I can find no place that pleases me.' As Eknath heard His words he was astonished. 23. He said to Him, 'If such is your wish, You may remain here in my home.' With this Shri Hari was pleased.

KRISHNA'S DAILY SERVICE

24. He who is worthy of the worship of Brahmadev and the other gods, He whom Shiva and others contemplate, this Actor as if in a play, this Life of the world became a Brahman menial. 25. In describing rightly His deeds of fame, the *Vedas* and the *Puranas* became crazy; He fetched the water of the Godavari on a sling. 26. In the sea of milk there is an island by name of Prabhakar. The Recliner upon *Shesha*, the Dweller in *Vaikunth* (heaven), rose as soon as it was early dawn, regardless of weariness to His body. 27. Of whom *Yogis* weary themselves in performing the eight forms of *Yoga* practice, He rising early had the vessels polished bright that were used in the worship of God. 28. The beautiful dark complexioned Husband of Rukmini who is all over the world known as Giver of final deliverance, the Lord of the world, He swept the yard and sprinkled it with water and then smeared with cowdung the god-room

Himself. 29. He from whose feet the river Bhagirathi sprang, He, Shripati, lovingly filled the vessels needed in the worship of God and placed them there. 30. He whom the eighty-eight thousand *rishis* reverently worship, He, the Life of the world, becoming a Brahman menial, lovingly prepared the sandalwood paste. 31. He at whose feet the eight *Siddhis* (accomplishments personified) day and night cling, He, the Lord of the heart, making garlands placed them for the worship of God. 32. He by whose power the moon, the sun, and the bright stars look bright, He (*Adhokshaja*) trimmed the light used in the worship and was not ashamed of doing so. 33. He whose command the hosts of the gods including Indra obey, He gave to Eknath the various materials needed in the worship of God. 34. Whenever Eknath called out to Him ' Krishna, ' He came at once up before him reverently, He never allowed anything to be lacking in his service. He was always attentive.

PROPLE CALL KRISHNA SHRI KHANDYA

35. People called Him ' Shri Khandya the Brahman ' because He prepared the sandalwood paste for Eknath. All the citizens of the town marvelled at it. 36. They said among themselves, ' There is a Brahman who is serving at the house of Eknath, who does not accept any wages and who does all his work. ' 37. Without Eknath knowing it the Lord of Dwarka used to go into the other part of the house helping Eknath's wife in her duties lovingly and full of joy. 38. He swept the yard, sprinkled it with water and cleaned the household pots. He churned the curds. He said, ' Do not hesitate to ask me to perform any errand for you. ' 39. At times when work was behind, the dark complexioned One would sweep the kitchen with His own hands. Taking with Him the materials for cooking He went into the kitchen to do the cooking. 40. If there was any necessity for hurrying, He

used personally to serve food to the Brahmans. The food had a strange kind of sweet new taste. 41. The Life of the world served water to the Brahmans who as they drank it said, 'It has a new sweetness to it.' And this astonished their minds. 42. He the god was very fond of removing their used plates. He readily tucked up His *dhotar*, removed the food left on the plates and ate it with infinite delight. 43. Then taking the leaf-plates He would throw them outside and washing His hands He would also wash the dining ground.

44. The mother and the father of Eknath had already died and a very strange thing now happened. Let the pious listen to it.

EKNATH INVITES BRAHMANS

45. The day for the worship of ancestors came and Eknath invited the Brahmans saying, 'Tomorrow is my ancestors' day. Please come to the feast.' 46. Arising early in the morning He had the cooking prepared in his house. Just as soon as one and a half watches of the day had passed he asked the Brahmans to go and bathe. 47. Where Krishna serves in the form of a Brahman menial. how can there be the lack of anything? Garments and gifts of gold were there ready to give to the Brahmans. 48. After bathing, Eknath came back to his home. Going to the roof of his house he dried there the garments. 49. Just then an *unnameable* (out-caste) and his wife were both sweeping the alley below and suddenly the fragrance of the dainty food came to them. 50. The wife said to her out-caste husband, 'I receive delightful fragrance from food, such food as is not obtainable to us, but the fortunate Brahmans will eat it.' 51. The out-caste then said to his wife, 'Why do you lick your chops in vain? Such dainty food we can never have in all our lives. 52. There is the worship of ancestors in his (Eknath's) house to-day and so

they will bury even that which is left on the plates. So not recognizing this you have foolishly cherished such a useless desire. 53. An ox goes to a wedding and even rich men give it fodder to eat; but, my wife, how can there be in *our* fate that pleasure of dining upon such dainty food?'

EKNATH FEASTS OUT-CASTES FIRST

54. As they were thus talking to one another their conversation fell upon Eknath's ears. He then descended from the roof and said to his wife, 55. 'Two out-castes are sweeping. They desire to eat of the dainty food. Come now and give to them a feast of the food already prepared at our house.' 56. The wife said to him, 'A great amount of food has been cooked. Invite all the out-castes together with their children. 57. If we give a feast to two only, the others will remain unsatisfied. These two will go and invite the others and they will all come rushing here. 58. So let us invite them all and give them all to eat. *Janardan* (God) is in all creatures, and so we should make these out-castes happy.' 59. Eknath then went outside and invited all the out-castes. Seeing them in the alley he felt intense compassion for them. 60. He served perfumes, rice, flowers that had been prepared to use in the worship of the Brahman and Eknath made an offering of them to the out-castes. 61. Placing the leaf-plates before each by the hand of *Shudras* he served them with the dainty food. He placed before them melted butter, sugar, vegetables and salt.

OUT-CASTES MADE HAPPY

62. Knowing certainly that *Janardhan* (God) is in all men, Eknath made the offering to God and said, 'Krishna is the enjoyer of this food.' 63. Eknath said to them, 'Start now to eat; and all the out-castes great and small, including children, then partook of the dainty food. All ate to their fill. 64. They received such delicious

food as they had never seen or heard of. They exclaimed, 'Blessed is your action, O Eknath. You have indeed made us feel happy. 65. We belong to the most inferior out-castes. We never had seen such food before. We shall remember you all our lifetime, as the merciful *Vaishnava*. 66. Eknath served them with whatever dish they desired. All were fully satisfied and to all he gave *pansupari*. 67. Every bit of food remaining in the house he gave to them. Then he had his house and pots cleaned. 68. Giving out new materials for cooking he engaged many female cooks and the dainty food which resulted was ten times more than before.

BRAHMANS ANGRY AT EKNATH FEEDING OUT-CASTES

69. The Brahmans who were asked to bathe learned the news that Eknath had feasted the out-castes before them. 70. They said to one another, 'Eknath has done a very strange thing. He invited us to the feast of the anniversary of his ancestors, but instead he gave a feast to the unnameables.' 71. The Brahmans angrily consulted among themselves and said, 'Let no one from to-day take food from this defiled person.' 72. All who were learned in the *Shastras* went to Eknath's house and angrily belaboured him with harsh words. 73. Some said, 'You evildoer, you have violently insulted us. Without having feasted the Brahmans, you wicked man, you honoured the out-castes. 74. Were *your* ancestors unmentionable that you honoured these lowest of the out-castes, namely, those reviled by the *Vedas* and the *Shastras*? 75. You are seeking to bring about at once a mixture of castes. You have set about establishing an evil custom, thereby doing away with the duties of Brahmans.' 76. Hearing these words of the Brahmans, Eknath joined his hands and humbly pleaded with them, 'I have already had prepared another cooking in the house. 77. The fragrance of the

first cooking was smelt by the out-castes. How could I have given you that which remained after the feast? 78. So having given to them a feast I immediately had another feast prepared. Forgive me, you compassionate ones, and purify this memorial day.' 79. The Brahmans replied, 'You have insulted us to-day. The food which is to be offered to fire in great sacrifice, you have thrown it before the crows. 80. You have, as it were, thrown a bottle full of the sacred Bhagirathi water into a latrine; or it has been like taking the jewel ornament of a queen and giving it to a slave; 81. or as if you took the paste of sandalwood of the Maila mountain and rubbed it on a donkey; or as if you had taken the *tulsi* leaf used in the worship of Vishnu and offered it to a mosque; 82. or as if you took nectar and wholly wasted it by throwing it on ashes; 83. so without giving us a feast, you have gladly honoured the out-castes; thus you have done what is wrong and placed a stain upon yourself.' 84. Having spoken thus the Brahmans excommunicated Eknath and somewhat concerned he sat in silence.

ANCESTORS ATTEND THE FEAST

85. Krishna, who was in the house as a menial Brahman and who was also known by another name of Shri Khandya, said to Eknath, 'Why are you sad? 86. Your ancestral ceremonies are to be performed here to-day. Therefore do not be concerned in reference to it. Your ancestors will come speedily to eat the prepared feast. 87. After the feast has been prepared let the leaf-plates be placed for the feast.' Eknath now became full of joy, yet was very much astonished. 88. He served many kinds of dainty food, melted butter and sugar. The moment his lips uttered the word 'Come,' his ancestors came and sat down. 89. After they had been honoured and their feet washed, and after the *ransupari*, the

sandalwood paste and the sacred thread, he gave them golden gifts. 90. The moment Eknath made an offering of food to the supreme *Brahma*, the ancestors began to eat. Whatever food they had a desire for, they took it and gladly ate. 91. The confidence he placed at the feet of Janardan was seen in the form of ancestors. Eknath was indeed happy when he saw his ancestors. 92. After his ancestors were satisfied with the feast, he gave them water to wash their hands, and after having given the *pansupari* and the gifts of money he said to them, 93. 'What shall I do with the food that still remains?' They replied, 'Dine on it together with your friends.' 94. The Brahmans who were standing by the door heard these words, and opened the door and came inside to see. 95. There they actually saw the ancestors completing their feast. The moment they were seen they became invisible. All the Brahmans were astonished at what they saw. 96. The Brahmans then went outside and said amongst one another, 'Eknath is not an ordinary man, but a direct *avatar* of Vishnu. 97. We have been proud of our rights and have tried to nullify his purpose. But Shri Krishna is helping him and is favourable to him because of his devotion. 98. The moment he falls into any distress the eagle-bannered One comes to his help. He has today caused his ancestors actually to dine with him thereby bringing shame on us.' 99. Some said, 'We have lost the various kinds of dainty food; as one cannot understand the future, it is fate which is to be blamed. 100. Now let us all go tomorrow and humbly tell Eknath that he should now take penance and remain in his caste. 101. If we say he is already purified, our pride will have gone for naught. By putting a penalty upon Eknath we shall turn him again to a right course of action.'

THE BRAHMANS ASSIGN TO EKNATH A PENANCE

102. The next day all the Brahmans assembled together

on the sandy bank of the river and invited Eknath to come to them. 103. When Eknath came he made these Brahmans a *namaskar*. He said to them, 'For what purpose have you, my lords, invited me here?' 104. They replied to him, 'Without knowing what you were doing you have committed a fault. Now take penance and give honour to these rules of the *Vedas*.' 105. Hearing what the Brahmans said Eknath replied, 'I absolutely refuse to perform a penance. So long as Shri Krishna is my mother and father, how can I do what is wrong?' 106. The Brahmans replied, 'Act with reason and give honour to our request. Your body will not be purified unless you receive a penance.' 107. Then having bathed him in the Godavari they gave Eknath a penance. They placed ashes and cowdung on him and repeated the *mantras* given in the *Vedas*.

A BRAHMAN LEPER ARRIVES AT PAITHAN

108. Just then a Brahman suddenly arrived from Trimbakeshwar. He said to the people, 'Which one is Eknath? Tell me.' 109. This man's whole body was covered with leprosy sores and no part of his body was clean. Seeing such a form as this the Brahmans said clearly to him, 110. 'That one over there, who is taking a penance in the water, is called Eknath. Why do you ask for him? Tell us quickly.' 111. To this the Brahman leper replied, 'While performing austerities at Trimbak, Shiva appeared to me in a dream and sent me here. 112. This Husband of Uma said to me, "At Paithan there is the *bhakta* of Vishnu, Eknath. He has feasted a great many of the unmentionables on the day of the ancestor ceremony. 113. This is a holy deed of his. If you go at once to him and if he will give you a part of his holy deeds, your leprosy will go away at once." 114. The moment I had this dream I started to come.' Hearing these words, all the twice-born were astonished. 115. 'In what

Shastra', they said, 'is it written as a holy thing to cast Brahmans aside and dine the out-castes?' Some said, 'This is all false. Shankar (Shiva) got rid of this fasting Brahman.' 116. Another one said, 'Sit quietly. Does one need a mirror to see the bracelets on one's hand? Let us see how Eknath's trust turns out.'

EKNATH CURES THE LEPER

117. The leper then went into the water of the Godavari and said to Eknath, 'Shiva causes you to repeat for me the good deed you did for the unmentionables.' 118. Eknath said, 'I will give you what you desire', and he poured water upon his hand. All the Brahmans stood amazed at seeing the strange sight. 119. Suddenly in the twinkling of an eye his skin had a lustre. Seeing this very wonderful thing the Brahmans were astonished in their minds. 120. They said to one another, 'We have been proud of our clinging to our usual duties and that is what has hindered us. To give a penance to a Vishnu *bhakta* has only brought a stain upon ourselves.' 121. The twice-born then said to Eknath, 'You are indeed the *avatar* of Vishnu. You are not an ordinary man, we now truly understand this. 122. The Himalaya mountains do not need a breeze from a fan; the sky does not need a garment; fire does not need a bath; so you, a noble *Vaishnava*, are pure. 123. Nectar does not require cooking; the ocean does not need to go to sacred bathing places; so you do not need a penance. We now understand it. 124. You have shown us a seemingly impossible thing. You have brought and feasted your ancestors. No one has ever seen or heard such a thing before. Now we have seen it personally with our eyes.' 125. Then taking Eknath by the hand they immediately proceeded to his house. They said to him, 'The Husband of Rukmini is your helper. We know it now for a

certainty.' 126. There Eknath gave the Brahmans gifts, and bowed his head to the water in which their feet were washed. They then returned to their homes and their minds were full of astonishment. 127. They exclaimed, 'Blessed is this *bhakta* of Vishnu. He is constantly interested in the service of Brahmans. With loving feelings he worships God according to prescribed rules.' 128. So it was in connection with all the people of Paithan. Some reviled Eknath, some praised him, but Eknath was always full of joy. He did not allow himself to fall into any excess either of joy or sorrow.

IDENTITY OF SHRI KHANDYA DISCLOSED

129. There was a Brahman who went to Dwarka. Having a repentant heart he performed austerities with a desire to meet the Husband of Rukmini. 130. Just then Radha and Rukmini appeared to him in a dream. They said to him, 'The Holder of the disk (Vishnu) is not here at Dwarka, so depart from here. 131. On the banks of the Godavari at Pratishthan (Paithan) there is the *Vaishnava bhakta* Eknath who constantly feasts the Brahmans. Go to that place. 132. Krishna, or Shri Khandya, as a Brahman menial has lived there for twelve years. He is truly Narayan the supreme *Brahma*. So you should have a sight of Him. 133. The Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven) is remaining there serving His *bhakta*. He does not care anything for us, so go at once and bring Him here.' 134. Listening to what was said to him in the dream, the Brahman was delighted. He then came to Pratishthan and inquired of the people, 135. 'There is here a *bhakta* of Vishnu by name of Eknath. He is very interested in the service of Brahmans. Show me his house at once.' Saying this he proceeded. 136. Asking again and again he finally reached Eknath's house. When Eknath saw this performer of austerities he bowed to him. 137. Eknath

gave him a seat and said to him, ' From whence have you come? What are the various bathing-places you have visited, and from which have you come to this place?' 138. The performer of austerities replied, ' I have come here to meet Krishna or Shri Khandya, the Brahman menial. I have come hurrying here.' 139. Eknath said to him, ' He has gone to the Godavari river for water. Remain a moment quietly. He will soon return.' 140. Just then Krishna with vessels full of water on a sling on His shoulder came into Eknath's yard. Seeing the performer of austerities there He felt a hesitation. 141. He said to Himself, ' I have been here for twelve years full of joy. I wonder what this creditor of mine has come for whom I suddenly see here.' 142. Thus the Lord of *Vaikunth* (heaven) thinking to Himself became concerned.

KRISHNA AS A BRAHMAN MENIAL

Just then a very remarkable thing happened. Listen to it, you *bhaktas* of His, and pious ones. 143. Eknath said to the performer of austerities, ' Look, here is Krishna the Brahman menial.' The man then suddenly arose and embraced Krishna's feet. 144. The lord of the earth carrying the sling of water then went into the god-room. Putting down the water jars, He became invisible. 145. The performer of austerities stood outside waiting for Him, but the Husband of Rukmini did not return. When he looked into the god-room he saw no one there. 146. So mourning over the matter he threw himself down on the ground and exclaimed, ' On seeing me, the Holder of the disk (Krishna) ran away.' 147. When Eknath saw this he asked an explanation of the performer of austerities. He said to him, ' Why have you become so sorrowful? Tell me quickly.' 148. The man told him everything. He fell at Eknath's feet, and both full of emotion embraced one another. 149. Eknath said to the performer of

austerities. 'Blessed is your special fortune. You recognized at sight the Pervader of the world and worshipped His feet at leisure. 150. I have not recognized God and I gave Him many things to do.' Thus with repentance in his heart Eknath now praised Keshava (Krishna). 151. He said, 'O Lover of Thy *bhaktas*, Helper of the lowly, You have borne heavy burdens here. Your story not being known, a great wrong has been done here to You. 152. You, the Holder of the disk (Krishna), supremely tender One, used to carry the load of water barefooted. Pebbles must have hurt Your feet. You have done a most remarkable thing. 153. You have been here twelve years and it did not come to my understanding who You were. Seeing You in the guise of a (menial) Brahman, I asked You to do many things for me. 154. You are worthy of the worship of Brahmadev and other gods; Your feet Shiva contemplates; with Your own hands You prepared the sandalwood paste and gave it to me for performing worship. 155. The performers of austerities go through many different kinds of practices and would look at You with extreme delight. Some are constantly visiting sacred bathing-places, but You do not become visible to them. 156. You, O Lord of the heart, are difficult to approach. No one understands Your miraculous deeds. Having been born to Yashoda, she considered You as her son, 157. but when You were leaving Gokul, You went to Mathura and then she recognized You. In the same way twelve years have passed and I did not recognize You, the Infinite One.' 158. With this repentance in his heart Eknath mourned in many ways. Now if I in love should go into details, this book would increase overmuch.

159. Eknath's wife was a supremely pious and dutiful wife. She said, 'O God supreme, Husband of Rukmini, we needlessly caused You weariness. 160. You, the supremely tender Govinda, arose to perform Your service

in the early morning. O Mukund (Krishna), without knowing You, we acted very disrespectfully towards You. 161. You, who are worshipped by all the gods, used to eat after we had done so. You paid no attention to hunger or thirst. So evil a person am I, O Shri Krishna.' 162. Thus for twelve years Shri Krishna had remained with them. If we make mention of the constant good deeds He performed during that time, great will be this book in its details.

DNYANDEVA APPEARS TO EKNATH IN A DREAM

163. It happened one night that Eknath was asleep when Dnyandeva came to him in a dream and said to him, 164. 'Come to Alandi, open my tomb and look inside. There the roots of the *ajan* tree have come near me and hurt me. 165. Push these roots aside and then again close my tomb.' Eknath having this dream, immediately awoke. 166. He then came to Alandi and bathed in the Indrayani river. He worshipped Siddheshwar and opening the tomb, looked inside. 167. There on his hard couch Dnyanraj was sitting. His divine form was a mass of light. There was nothing to be compared to it. 168. Eknath made his *namaskar* to Dnyandeva and kept gazing into the tomb. He there saw the root of the *ajan* tree that reached Dnyandeva. 169. With his own hand he pushed the roots aside and then closed the door of the tomb. With mortar he closed the tomb and arranged the slabs of stones as they were before.

170. Alandi at that time was quite deserted and he was unable to obtain materials for cooking. His band of disciples became hungry. Just then the Lord of Pandhari came to his help. 171. The Lord of the world personally provided for the hunger and thirst of His *bhaktas*. Taking the form of a grocer He erected a small tent and sat there. 172. Eknath seeing this rejoiced in his heart and said, 'A merchant has come here in this bazar. Let us

purchase of him whatever we need.' 173. He then sent two Brahmans and they brought back all the materials necessary in their garments. They remarked, 'Be calm in your mind. We shall bring you the money.' 174. The Lord of Pandhari then said, 'I am here for today. Let all of you perform the cooking and eat at your lodging. 175. I am acquainted with Eknath. But he does not recognize Me. Hearing that he has come on a pilgrimage here, I have brought all the materials needed for cooking.' 176. The moment the Brahmans had turned their backs on *Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the heart, Krishna) He became invisible. They all felt this very strange, and they reported the matter to Eknath. 177. They said to him, 'The grocer gave to us all the materials that we needed and then at once he became invisible. He did this without our giving any money to Him. A most extraordinary thing has taken place.' 178. Eknath hearing what they had to say was moved with emotion. He exclaimed, 'The Lord of Pandhari has laboured hard on our behalf.' 179. When the cooking was ready he dined along with the Brahmans and remained there that night and lovingly performed a *kirtan*.

EKNATH AND HIS GURU JANARDAN

180. The next day making his *namaskar* to Dnyandeve's tomb he immediately started for home. Returning to Pratishtan he there worshipped with love. 181. Such was the condition of the mind of Eknath. All the three worlds appeared to him in the form of his *guru* Janardan (i.e., God) Who is present in every creature.* I have no doubt of this in my mind. 182. Thus contemplating Janardan he himself became Janardan; no difference could be seen there; just like the water of a river in the sea; 183. or like a lamp and its light, are of different names but are the something,

Or, There appeared to him in all the three worlds the form of his *guru* Janardan (i. e., God) Who is present in every creature.

so there was no difference whatever between Eknath and Janardan. 184. Camphor and its fragrance are one; there is no difference between water and fluidity; a flower and its honey live together in love; 185. likewise Eknath and Janardan became one in essence. Mahipati comes to them as a devoted suppliant and with reverence worships their feet.

186. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the forty-sixth very delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XLVII

RAMDAS *

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lord of Dwarka.

STORIES OF SAINTS BRING PEACE AND LOVE

1. Listen, O hearers, to the following beautiful story. By it there will be created a love for the supreme spiritual riches. 2. And the moment one listens to it the snare of desire and the wrong thoughts of doubt are thereby destroyed; the very idea of diversity entirely ceases; peace and joy come without effort into one's hands. 3. Free from action and non-action one should be impressed with the love of worship. The good Being has proclaimed the incomparable glory of the stories of the saints. 4. Why need explain this at length? Fortunate ones understand this secret by experience, namely, those whose hearts are possessed by indifference to earthly things, who have turned to the path of *bhakti*, 5. who have also discarded popular praise, and who dance enthusiastically in the *kirtans*. Others than these do not know the sweetness of these stories. 6. But you fortunate hearers are already rich in good deeds, therefore with the earnest longing to listen to these stories you are seated with love to listen.

PARENTAGE OF RAMDAS

7. In the previous chapter we listened to the extraordinary story of the God-loving Vishnu *bhakta* Eknath who was the embodiment of the *avatar* of Vishnu. 8. There is upon the banks of the Godavari the town of Jamb. There was here a noble Brahman who was a worshipper of Rama. He was supremely pious, wise and clever, and

*For a detailed life of this saint, see the volume entitled *Ramdās*, the 8th volume of the *Poet Saints of Mahāśaṣṭra*.

generous in everything. 9. Both husband and wife were of one mind. Night and day with love they worshipped Shri Rama. 10. He carried on the occupation of *kulkarni* (the town scribe). They always lived at Jamb and used to feed those who came to ask for food, feeling in their hearts a compassion for all creatures. 11. When the birth-festival of Rama arrived he invited *Sadhus* and *Vaishnavas*; erecting a pavilion they celebrated the festival in joy. 12. Lovingly preparing all the materials needed they feasted the twice-born with dainty food. During the nine days they performed *kirtans* at night with joy and the watch-night service. 13. They had in their house antique images of Shri Rama, Sita and Lakshman. Chairs of state were erected for them and they were worshipped with the sixteen materials. 14. In the pavilion musical instruments were played and they celebrated this festival every year enthusiastically. 15. On the tenth night they performed the *lalit* ceremony and all *sadhus* and saints were honoured. Feeling for them intense love, with reverence they bowed to them.

RAMDAS AS MARUTI'S ' AVATAR '

16. But they had no son and therefore the wife was troubled. But one night as they were soundly sleeping the Brahman had a dream. 17. In the dream Shri Raghunath (Rama) said to the Brahman, ' An embodiment of the *avatar* of Maruti will be born to you. 18. Complete *bhakti* and indifference to earthly things will live in him. So you will see a treasure of a son, the *avatar* of the son of Anjani (Maruti). '

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF RAMDAS

19. When the Brahman had this dream he at once awoke astonished in his mind and told his wife of the dream. 20. Hearing what her husband had to say she experienced peace of mind and after nine months she gave birth

to the treasure of a son. 21. In their house was every form of wealth and happiness. Then on the top of that they looked upon the face of a son. The Brahman felt supreme happiness and exclaimed, 'The Husband of Janaki (Rama) has come to our help. 22. The Lord of Ayodhya (Rama) being pleased has given us a son.' It was a matter of great joy and the name of Ramdas was given to him after twelve days had passed. 23. Day by day he grew and at five years of age he was invested with the sacred thread. They kept in the house a Brahman who knew the *Vedas*, and Ramdas was kept under his tuition.

MARRIAGE OF RAMDAS

24. The wife now said to her husband, 'We must have our son married.' The priest then went immediately and chose a bride. 25. Then they prepared the materials for the wedding and selected a great number of ornaments, garments and adornments, and taking with them male and female relatives they set off. 26. The father of the bride received the party of the bridegroom and worshipped him. A place was given them to lodge and instruments were played with intense joy. They installed the gods and made offerings to the Brahmans. 27. The deities of the ceremony were installed and Brahmans were feasted, and as the fixed time for the wedding drew near the ceremony of the offering of honey to the bridegroom was performed. 28. The Brahman priests who held the curtain then began to repeat the eight-verse blessing. At last all of them finally began to repeat the words *Savadhan* ('Beware' or 'Be attentive!') 29. Ramdas asked a priest who was near him, 'To whom are you saying *Beware*? Tell me.' 30. He replied, 'It is for *you* to beware. From today the bondage of domestic life falls upon you. 31. One's domestic life is full of supreme sadness. There is not the slightest happiness there. Those who have entered this domestic life suffer

hindrances to the utmost. 32. Therefore all the priests are telling you to *beware*.' When Ramdas heard this he trembled violently. 33. With a feeling of indifference to worldly things he immediately ran off into the woods.

RAMDAS RUNS AWAY INTO A FOREST

His mother and father ran out to catch him, but he had no love now for his home. 34. If the diner understands that the cooked food is mixed with poison, he at once puts away his plate and turns away from every formality; 35. likewise disgusted with the happiness of sensual things, Ramdas suddenly ran away. People tried hard to pacify him but he would listen to no one. 36. His mother and father went into the forest in search of him. They thought they might create a love in their son but he would not return. 37. Ramdas said to his father, 'Why do you in vain seek to entangle me in earthly things? Life in earthly things is a heap of suffering. I understand all this now. 38. In order to provide for one's desire one may marry a beautiful wife and in caring for her he may exhaust his body. 39. By serving a wealthy person one may obtain wealth, but suddenly a thief will come and take his life. 40. When a fish understands that there is a hook in the bait he will run away in the water. So it has happened to me. 41. A parrot, seeing with his eyes an instrument made to catch him, flies away into the sky. In that way I understand not to fall into the snare of worldly things. 42. So drop your concern for me and return to your home.' Saying this to them he quickly walked away into the forest. 43. The father, understanding in his heart that this Brahmachari (an unmarried, chaste youth), the *avatar* of Maruti, would never agree to be drowned in the flood of worldly things, returned to his home. 44. He then reminded his wife of the vision which he had had. He exclaimed, 'Blessed

is our family, for a son has proceeded from us indifferent to worldly things.' 45. Thus comforted in mind they returned to their home, put aside affection for their son, and in their hearts contemplated Shri Raghunath (Rama).

MARUTI REVEALS HIMSELF TO RAMDAS

46. Ramdas then went and sat alone in the forest. Full of indifference to worldly things he thought thus : 47. ' In this *Kali Yuga*, austerities and bathing in different sacred places are not the means (to salvation). The proper means is to go as a suppliant to Shri Rama and contemplate Him. 48. When Pingala the prostitute took the name of Rama she was immediately taken up to heaven. Dhurjati (Shiva) by repeating God's name was cooled in heart.' 49. With this belief he sat repeating the names of Rama and partook neither of fruit, root or water but started on a very severe course of austerities in his complete devotion. 50. He exclaimed, ' Victory to the Dweller in Ayodhya, Son of Dashrath, the Son of Kausalya, the Husband of Janaki, Slayer of Ravan, Saviour of the world, and generous in His gifts of final deliverance, Shri Rama. 51. I am Thy helpless, lowly one. I am sitting here in the forest in a very pitiful condition. Thou who art the Advocate of *bhaktas*, Purifier of sinners, give me a manifestation of Thyself.' 52. Thus while he was pleading for compassion, Maruti immediately revealed himself. He appeared in a terrible form, but Ramdas was not afraid. 53. It was just like a blazing fire endeavouring to burn out another fire. But he had no fear whatever because the two were one. 54. If the sun (the day-maker) goes to the house of the sun (the possessor of brilliant rays) he does not feel the heat, so although Maruti met him with a very terrible form, Ramdas was not at all disturbed. 55. The full moon brings high tide to the ocean; it might attempt to hide

its waves but they will not sink in the water because they and the water are one. 56. If space full of anger suddenly wished to swallow the sky, would it be able to swallow it? This would be a vain attempt, like that of frightening Ramdas. 57. So the Son of Anjani tried to make Ramdas afraid, but he was without fear because he considered himself as one with him. 58. Seeing the determination of Ramdas, Maruti felt comforted and assuming a very mild form he lovingly manifested Himself to him. 59. Ramdas embraced and worshipped Maruti's feet. He exclaimed, 'Now tell me some means by which I will have a vision of Rama.' 60. As soon as Maruti had assured him that he should not fear he became invisible. Ramdas then went into the town to beg for food on his open palm. 61. Having eaten a small amount of that food he then went into the forest and there began to meditate on God. Because of his feelings of repentance he felt no drowsiness or laziness. 62. There his own mind was his audience and his own mind was the speaker. There is no giver of knowledge or *sadguru* of more importance than the mind. 63. He instructed his own mind and he composed two hundred and five verses. Those who with love sing those verses and read them, indifference to earthly things becomes their slave. 64. Keeping the form of Rama in his mind, he danced in the *kirtan* with love. His throat choked with emotion and tears of joy flowed down from his eyes. 65. He had the firm conviction that bushes, trees, stones, birds, animals, and wild beasts were all his dear friends. 66. At midday he would go into the town and remain there long enough to beg. With that he quieted his hunger and then continued sitting in the forest. 67. Men who were engaged in domestic life would come to him and he would run away from them. He said to himself, 'They will get me entangled in the net of illusion.' 68. He who seeks the supreme spiritual riches is indifferent to earthly things, knowing

and courageous; if such an one associates himself with worldly-minded men they surely will lead him to disaster. 69. If a bag of musk is placed even for a moment with *Hing* its value will be lessened, for even by a moment's contract it contracts evil qualities. 70. If tobacco and betelnut are placed together the betelnut will take the vile smell; of this there is no doubt. 71. So all those who are ignorant and engaged in worldly things are entirely surrounded by illusions. If good people indifferent to earthly things associate with them they are hindered in their purposes. 72. Therefore Ramdas, who was of ascetic temperament, ran away the moment he saw men, and as a God-loving man unconscious of his own body was all the time repeating God's name.

RAMDAS GOES TO PANDHARI

73. It now happened on a day in the month of *Ashadh* (July) that Ramdas as a pilgrim was on his way to Pandhari. Maruti said to him, 'Shri Rama will meet with you there.' 74. Seeing this vision he felt supreme happiness. Ramdas then with love and enthusiastic singing proceeded rapidly to Pandhari. 75. There he found *Vaishnavas* singing and dancing with joy, sounding the cymbals and the drums. He saw before him the Bhimarathi and a doubt came into his mind. 76. He said to himself, 'He whom I contemplate is not here at all.' Still despite this doubt, he continued in the worship of Shri Rama. 77. He sang with his lips the deeds of Shri Rama and coming to the great door of the temple he suddenly saw before him the Eagle and Hanumant. 78. Bowing to Maruti as he began to gaze onward he saw the *Vaishnava* saints and *sadhus* continually praising God with joy. 79. They danced with music and with banners having on them the designs of eagles, as if *Vaikunth* (heaven) had descended to the earth. Ramdas felt joy with love as he saw

all this. 80. He then bowed to the *Haridas* and proceeded to obtain a vision of God. Suddenly from a distance he saw the Life of the world standing on a brick. 81. His feet were parallel, His hands were on His waist and he was looking at the point of His nose. Seeing such a form as this, Ramdas would not embrace him. 82. He said to himself, 'I continually perform *manas-puja* (mental worship) in which I see the form of Shri Rama which I do not see here.' Then standing before the god he said, 83. 'What have You done with the bow and the arrow, and why have you placed Your hands upon Your hips? Why have You changed your form? Tell me at once, O Shri Rama. 84. O Lord of the world, have you determined not to speak? You say nothing to us. What fault do You hold against me? Tell me at once. 85. Have You left Sharayu Ganga? For here I see flowing the Bhimarathi river in its stead. Why has this sudden change happened? Tell me, O Raghunath (Rama). 86. Has Ayodhya City been wiped out that the sacred city of Pandhari is founded here? What has become of beautiful Sita? And why have Your four wives been brought here? 87. I do not see here at all the army of innumerable monkeys. Now to whom shall I bow? Tell me at once, O Shri Rama. 88. I see Hanumant alone here. Why has he broken away from the army of monkeys? What *bhakta* was he who by deceiving You has stood You up in this place? 89. Now whom shall I embrace, so that my heart may feel comfort? To whom shall I bow prostrate? I do not know.' 90. His throat choked with emotion, tears flowed down from his eyes and he said, 'O Dweller in Ayodhya, O Husband of Janaki, meet with me at once. 91. I am Your helpless and lowly one. I see myself here in a piteous condition. Now look towards me with compassion, and give me a vision of Yourself, O Shri Rama.'

VITHOBA APPEARS AS RAMA

92. Seeing Ramdas' determination the Husband of Rukmini was pleased. He exclaimed, 'Blessed is the *bhakti* of Ramdas. His worship is worthy of that name.'

93. The Life of the world then said to Rukmini, 'My *bhakta* the worshipper of Rama has come here to see us. So become Sita.'

94. Speaking thus, the Lord of Pandhari changed His form. Taking the form of Shri Rama He was now ready to embrace Ramdas.

95. He wore His crown and brilliant earrings and assumed His beautiful clear complexion, dark as a cloud. He held his bow and arrow in his hand and stood in an upright posture.

96. Mother Rukmini stood by Him, having at that moment taken the beautiful form of Sita. The *bhakta* seeing this, felt great joy of heart.

97. Ramdas then came near to the god and gave Shri Rama an embrace. As he gazed upon His form he felt comfort.

98. His throat choked with emotion and tears of joy flowed from his eyes. He embraced His feet and placed his head there with reverence.

99. It had been a long time since he had met Him and so now he felt comfort as the Lord of the world looked with the eye of compassion upon him.

100. He said to Ramdas, 'Because of My love for you I have assumed the form of Rama. Now bring into your contemplation this very form and destroy all thoughts of duality.'

101. Collect a band of disciples and continue to perform *kirtans* reverently, whereby the dull-minded and the ignorant will turn to worship me.'

102. The Husband of Janaki having told him this He placed upon his head the hand of assurance. Then placing His hands upon His hips He again changed His form.

103. The Life of the world at that moment took the form of Pandurang. He, the Performer through the power of *maya* (illusion), and Enchanter of the Heart, does not allow His wonderful deeds completely to be under-

stood. 104. Blessed is the loving *bhakti* of Ramdas whereby He has made the Lord of the world subservient to him; and Shripati (Krishna) took the form that he (Ramdas) had desired. 105. Then having embraced the image of Vitthal with reverence he grasped His feet. Ramdas then began to perform a *kirtan* in honour of Hari with love and joy. 106. He had a doubt that these were two different forms such as Rama and Krishna but God removed it and set him to worship with a sense of non-duality.

RAMDAS VISITS JEJURI

107. After the festival of the *Gopalkala* he took leave of the god and started home. As he was going homeward along the road he came to Jejuri. 108. When Ramdas came into the city the Husband of Mhalsa (Khandoba) was pleased at heart and exclaimed, 'Blessed is this *aishwarya bhakta* who knows no other deity but Rama. 109. He does not bow to the image of Pandurang, then how can he accept the sight of myself? Still I will take the form of a man and go to meet him.' 110. So the Husband of Mhalsa became exactly like King Shivaji. He rode upon a horse and on his brow he rubbed the turmeric powder. 111. In this form the Slayer of Mani and Malla came towards him without a moment's delay. Seeing Ramdas at a distance he dismounted from his horse. 112. He exclaimed, 'Blessed is this happy day that I have had a sudden sight of you, my *Swami*.' He then seized the feet of Ramdas and lovingly gave him an embrace. 113. He who was truly the *avatar* of Shiva, He worshipped the feet of Ramdas. Joining His hands together he said to Ramdas, 114. 'Whenever you go to Pandhari, give me the opportunity of seeing you. I have lived here in this fort for many days and have wish to meet you.' 115. The Husband of Mhalsa (Khandoba), having thus spoken to Ramdas, added, 'Those who worship Shri Rama are pleasing to me

as good men.' 116. As Ramdas was about to reply to him, he became invisible. Neither the horse nor the king was now there. He exclaimed, 'This is an astonishing and novel thing.' 117. When he looked at the matter from the point of reason he said to himself, 'The Husband of Mhalsa, the real *avatar* of Shiva had really come here, He who continually worships Rama. 118. So let me go and look at His place of abode.' Thus thinking he started forward. 119. This beloved of Shri Rama, the true *avatar* of Maruti, hastened to the fort and looked upon the Husband of Mhalsa. 120. Bringing to his mind the form of Shri Rama he made there a *namaskar* and in the assembly hall performing a *kirtan* he composed and sang there a hymn of praise. 121. The hymn of praise which Ramdas composed started: '*Panchanan* (five faced), *Hayawahan* (riding on a horse).' Then making Him a *namaskar* he started homewards.

SHIVAJI BECOMES DISCIPLE OF RAMDAS

122. As Ramdas returned to Jamb, Shivaji received the news that Martand (Khandoba) had taken his own (Shivaji's) form and had met Ramdas. 123. Having heard this praiseworthy report of Ramdas he came to him as a suppliant with feelings of reverence. Then Ramdas seeing that Shivaji had the authority of being his disciple he gave him instruction.

RAMDAS COMPOSES THE *DASBODH*

124. Ramdas caused other ascetic disciples to worship God as God-loving *bhaktas*. Ramdas, always indifferent to earthly things, was never disturbed in mind. 125. To him honour or dishonour were the same. He sat by himself in the forest. If he thought that he would be entangled by any popular movements he would finally run away from that place. 126. To his sight a king and a pauper and one of humble birth were the same. He was well-intentioned

towards all creatures. This knowledge of the soul had been revealed to him. 127. In select words drawn from his personal experience he composed the book entitled *Dasbodh*. Even if the dull-minded should read it with reverence they would become like those with deep knowledge. 128. The knowledge of Ramdas was extraordinary and he composed a book on philosophy. Those *Vaishnava bhaktas* who listen to it become *Jvanmuktas* (delivered though still living). 129. This noble *Vaishnava* became an *avatar* here upon this earth in order to save the world, a learned man in philosophy, extremely generous and compassionate to the humble. 130. Ramdas in his extraordinary state of mind saw everything with the same value as cowdung or dust. If he had received the wealth of Indra he would in no way have given any value to it. 131. He gave himself up to the listening of the praise of Shri Rama, to the repeating of His name and to bringing *Atmaram* into his contemplation. He regarded equally all creatures.

132. In the next chapter there is a most delightful story of incomparable interest of the Vishnu-*bhakta* Tukaram. It will show how the Good Being was pleased with him (Tukaram). 133. It is the Husband of Rukmini who is causing the interest of this story to be created. So Mahipati beseeches his hearers to give close attention.

134. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the World will be pleased. Listen then, you God-loving, pious *bhaktas*. This is the forty seventh deeply delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XLVIII

TUKARAM

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lord of Pandhri

GOD'S MOTHER-LOVE

1. Victory, Victory to Thee, O Ocean of mercy, the Cloud of joy, Merciful to Thy *bhaktas*, lotus-eyed One, the Father of Brahmadev, the Destroyer of the demons, the Life of the world, and the Lord of the world. 2. Victory, victory to Thee, the Pervader of the universe, the Husband of Kamala, the Life of the good, and the Image of joy; O thou, the Lord of the universe with Form and without Form, Whose ways are unimaginable to the *Vedas* and *Shastras*. 3. Victory, victory to Thee, Who hast hands without number, and Who art without limit. Thou seest with Thy universal eye and walkest with the universal feet, so the *Vedas* have described Thee. 4. Victory, victory to Thee, pure Intelligence, delighting in the contemplation of one's own soul, O Mine of virtues, the Best of the best, resplendent with one's own joy, O *Purushottam* (Vishnu); Thy glory is incomparable. 5. Thinking of Thee, the *Vedas* were defeated, and said, ' Not so, not so.' The *Puranas* have been wearied and the *Shastras* have been put to shame. 6. Thou art not obtainable by austerities, and by visiting the sacred places. Thou dost rush to listen to the praise-services of Thy *bhaktas*. 7. The ascetics practise all postures of *yoga*, including the *vajrasan* (bed of spikes). But O *Chakrapani* (Krishna), Thou dost ignore them and dost go in search of the pious. 8. Thou art the crest-jewel of all the gods, Thou art revered by Sanak and others and art higher than they, and Thou in person dost labour at the houses of the pious. 9. In working for Thy *bhaktas* Thou art not ashamed. Thou dost not care

for honour or dishonour, O Lord of Pandhari. 10. Such is the devotion of Thy *bhaktas* that they never put Thee to trouble. Thou dost make them to experience the miseries of the earthly life, and then dost grant them the highest indifference to worldly things. 11. Through the force of that indifference to worldly things they always sing Thy praises with love and abandon the uneasiness of their hearts. 12. Thou dost enter the hearts of the impious and dost make them persecute Thy *bhaktas*; then in person Thou dost rush to their help and dost keep their honour intact. 13. By doing something extraordinary Thou dost increase their reputation in the three worlds. In this way, O *Chakrapani* (Krishna), O Govinda, Thou art the debtor of Thy *bhaktas*. 14. Thou dost make someone as Thy instrument to describe their lives as men. As for me I am a plain dullard. Thou, O lotus-eyed One, art the enlightener. 15. O Lord of the helpless and the Husband of Rukmini, I bow to Thee again and again. Even in speaking in this way, my talent becomes wearied. 16. Without Thy favour, even an obeisance to Thee is not easy. Whatever will take place will not be without Thy power. 17. My mind is fickle and undergoes changes every moment. Good and bad thoughts will arise in my mind. O Shripati, Thou dost witness them. Need I speak of them with my own lips? 18. But O Husband of Rukmini, if I do not express them, Thou will not have mercy on me. For if the child does not cry the mother keeps it at a distance. 19. In the same manner, O *Chakrapani*, Thy *bhaktas* plead with Thee in words of compassion. Then Thou lookest on them with a merciful eye, and grantest them the boon of singing Thy praises full of love. 20. Such is the rule of Thy house. Ancient and fortunate saints have described it as such. Then, O Shripati (God), cause me to relate the astonishing fame of Thy *bhaktas*.

21. In the preceding chapter the wonderful story of Ramdas is related as to how the Lord of Pandhari, seeing his firm resolve, personally became the Lord Rama.

TUKARAM'S DISTRESSES

22. Now may the loving people with reverence listen to the following interesting narrative. At a distance of twelve from Alakapuri (Alandi), there is on the earth the sacred town of Dehu. 23. The god's *bhakta* of that place was Tukaram, whose surname was Ambale, and who carried on the business of a grocer, but in this business with the people he never told a lie. 24. He had two wives and a large fortune in his house. But he was always without pride for his body. All alone he was always thinking of God. 25. After the death of his parents his family life was full of misery. There was a dreadful famine in the land and whatever fortune he had was all spent. 26. Whatever grain and money he had before, nothing remained; just as the tidal flow of the ocean is dissolved in the ocean itself, 27. or as the clouds in the rainy season are dispersed in the cold season, or at the rise of the sun the stars disappear; 28. or just when old age comes, youth passes away or as grass is scorched at the advent of summer; 29. in the same way, when there was famine in the land, all the grain and money had gone; adults and children struggled for food, but they could not get it. 30. The elder wife had two sons, and the younger one had no issue. All of them boiled vegetables, and ate them; but they could not obtain a kernel of grain. 31. But what is destined cannot be avoided. The elder wife starved to death for lack of food. On this account shame overcame (Tukaram), and he could not have love for the family life. 32. Along with his fortune his honour passed away also. The relatives of Tukaram laughed at him as they saw him and then he was overcome with shame. 33. Those who former

ly respected him now reviled him. He was always in calamity for want of food and raiment, and his business was not at all in a good condition. 34. When men lose a fortune, no one cares for them; just as when the leaves of a tree are withered, a sensualist will not find it interesting; 35. or as when a king dies on the battlefield, those who love their bodies desert the field; in the same manner when poverty overtakes a person the evil-minded disrespect him. 36. When that hard time came, Tuka became full of shame. He could not see any friend in his family life. Then a thought arose in his mind. 37. If he intended to improve his business he could see nothing but loss. At such a calamitous time when he found himself in trouble, repentance arose in his mind. 38. He thought, 'This earthly life is unreal. It is the outcome of *maya* (illusion). The human body is perishable, I have spent my life for nothing, and I have forgotten the Lord of Pandhri. 39. If one sleeps on a cot full of bugs, how can he happily sleep there? If food is cooked with poison, it cannot be called good. 40. So those who say that there is happiness in the earthly life are the biggest fools. It is like the feeling of joy at the birth of a son to a barren woman.'

TUKARAM'S ASCETICISM

41. As he began to think in this way, *vairagya* (the ascetic spirit) came to Tuka. Then he considered joy and sorrow alike, and continually sang the praises of God. 42. There was an old temple of Pandurang in a dilapidated condition. He plastered it with mud himself, and then coated it clean with cowdung. 43. Among all the religious means of salvation, *Ekadashi* (the 11th day in each fortnight) is the highest of all rules. He began to observe it with entire devotion. 44. He wanted to perform a *kirtan* himself but he had not previously studied it, therefore if a saint sang he stood behind him as his companion. 45. He learnt

by heart the sayings of great old saints. He could see no better way, and so had a firm belief in them. 46. As he looked at people, compassion arose in his mind. He put himself to trouble to oblige them. If they were hungry, he quenched their hunger. 47. You might ask how he did it. Then I will tell you that in short. Listen to it. If a traveller wanted a lodging he would take him into the temple. 48. If anyone was hungry he gave him food. If he had none he would procure it with trouble. 49. If anyone was thirsty in a forest he gave him water. If anyone had travelled a long way he massaged him to his satisfaction. 50. If he saw a load on anyone's head, he took it on his own shoulders and gave the man some rest. 51. If he saw anyone sick on a journey and without any of his relatives by him, he very kindly gave him medicine and digestive food. 52. When cows and bullocks became feeble their masters left them with cruelty: he used to stroke them with his hands and gave them fodder and water. 53. If any *bhaktas* of Vishnu came to him he prostrated himself before them, reverently washed their feet, and drank the sacred water. 54. On account of this bodily penance, he gained poetic inspiration. He expressed in Marathi whatever is laid down in the *Vedas* and *Shastras*.

NAMDEV'S VOW TO WRITE POETRY

55. By way of illustration for the context, let us go back to a most interesting story. May the listeners listen quietly to it. 56. Once upon a time the *Vaishnava bhakta* Nama was saying to Pandurang, 'I will sing Thy praise in Marathi in a hundred million verses.' 57. At this the Husband of Rukmini said, 'In vain have you made this vow, O Nama. In this *Kali Yuga* one has only a hundred years of life, and it is full of accidents. 58. But you have made a vow and expressed it in words, but it will not be fulfilled.' Then Nama placed his head on the

feet of the Husband of Rukmini and thus implored Him: 59. 'My vow depends on thy help, O God. Therefore do Thou fulfil it in person. What is there that Thou art not able to do? Of what value am I?' 60. Hearing this entreaty of Nama, the Holder of the bow (God) was pleased. He placed His assuring hand on his head and ordered Sarasvati (the goddess of learning), 61. 'You sit on the tip of his tongue, and enable him to express poetically the secrets of the *Vedas* in the Marathi language.' 62. Then the daughter of Brahmadev (Sarasvati) humbly said, 'Namdev will speak out of inspiration; but O Chakrapani, employ someone to write quickly his utterances. 63. He must write the words as soon as they come from his mouth, but if asked to repeat the same words they will not come.' 64. On this He who is dark as a Cloud replied, 'I myself will write it always. Just now I do not see any quick writer.' 65. Then Chakrapani set aside all his games and enjoyments and taking an inkpot and pen in hand, began to write continuously the verses of Namdev. 66. I very much wonder over the fact that He whom the *Vedas* and *Shastras* praise, and Whom the poets like Vyas and Valmiki describe, became the writer of Nama's poetry. 67. The Life of the world gave up His home in *Vaikunth* and abandoned His reclining on the serpent Shesha in the ocean of milk, and waited upon Namdev with pen and inkstand in his hands. 68. Chakrapani was all attention to what came out from his lips. He shook off sleep and sloth, and was attentive day and night. 69. In this way Shripati sat in the company of Nama for several days. Listen to the vast amount of the poetry. 70. The verses amounted to ninety-four millions and forty-hundred thousand, and in the end there was the *lalit* containing nine hundred thousand. Seeing such a large amount the Lord of the world was wonder-struck. 71. He said, 'Blessed is Nama's love. He has sung My glory in a wonderful

way, the limit of which is not even understood by the *Vedas*. He has made Me *Purushottam* (Vishnu), his own. 72. Saying this, the Lord of the world patted Nama on the back, and then said, 'Still some of My love remains to be described. 73. Now think of My form at heart and look at Me with love and with eyes wide open.' As Chakrapani thus spoke, Nama fell at His feet. 74. 'You have made a vow to compose a hundred million verses, and to fulfil it, I, the Life of the world, will do the remaining verses Myself and thus carry it to completion.'

TUKARAM'S POETIC WORK A DIVINE COMMAND

75. Then God held Nama by the hand, and went to Tuka in a dream and said, 'Do not say anything senseless. By My order, now compose verses. 76. The limit of them is a hundred million. You carry it to completion.' Having said this the Lord of the world stroked his back. 77. As he woke up he could see neither the Husband of Rukmini nor Nama. It was a great wonder to him. 78. With bowed head he accepted the dream as an order and started with the art of poetry, contrary to which he did not utter anything meaninglessly. 79. In his *kirtan* he uttered words full of pathos and love. The pious *bhaktas* with love and devotion listened to it. 80. There were amongst the listeners some who were scrupulous and critical. They said, 'These poems are quite new and we do not consider them as an authority at all. We will not listen to them. 81. Why do you give up the words of the ancient saints, and try to show your greatness? When we obtain dainty foods without trouble, why should we put ourselves to the trouble of cooking and burn our hands?' 82. Now listeners are likely to ask, 'If the Husband of Rukmini ordered it, why should people call in question the poetry?' But it is an old story that behind devoted people there are always many revilers. 83. When in the *Treta* age Valmiki composed his *Ramayana* containing

his prophecies, even at that time there were impious men who did not consider it as an authority. 84. Then when the Husband of Janaki (Rama) became an *avatar* and acted exactly according to prophecy, and when the people saw it with their own eyes, they believed it. 85. In the *Dwapar*-age the poet Vyas gave out his prophecy but the Kauravas had no faith in it. But when it came true in its natural course, Dhritarashtra bowed to Sanjaya. 86. In this way for a long time past, men have persecuted the pious ones. This was why the low-minded reviled the verses of Tukaram; 87. just as at the sunlight the owl censures it, or like a thief does not like the coming of the moon in the east. 88. Hearing the reputation of a donor, the miserly despise him for nothing. At the sight of divine herbs shining at night diseases feel uneasy in mind. 89. The oration of a learned person is supposed as nonsensical prattle by a cowherd. Where there is the singing of a *gandharva*, the donkey is sure to bray. 90. Will the *pungul*-creeper like the odour of the *bakul* flower? Will the Muhammadans worship a cow, even if it is of a dark colour? 91. The Brahmans worship images but the Muhammadans smash them. In the same manner the pious listened to the praise services of Tuka while the revilers derided them. 92. But he considered both alike and continued his worship of Hari (God). If a *Haridas* performed a *kirtan*, he used to listen to it with reverence. 93. Day by day his love for God grew and along with it grew his devotion also. As he sang the praises of Hari (God) all alone at night, sleep did not overpower him at all. 94. In the months of *Ashadh* (July) and *Kartik* (November) he used to go as a pilgrim to Pandhri. Then on every fortnightly eleventh day he went to visit the god devotedly.

SHIVAJI VISITS TUKARAM

95. His freedom from desires was extraordinary.

One day King Shivaji hearing the reputation of Tukoba came to visit him. 96. In those days the Muhammadans were in power. King Shivaji was at Sinhagad. Without the knowledge of anyone he entered Poona. 97. There at a grocer's house the Vaishnava Tuka was performing a *kirtan*. As the king knew of it he was greatly pleased. 98. Then at night without anybody's knowledge he stealthily came into the town. He was very much afraid of the Muhammadans, for they might apprehend him and take him away. 99. The king came secretly with a view to visit Tukoba and go back to the fort. 100. He put some gold and silver coins in a shining plate of silver and placing it before Tuka, prostrated himself before him. 101. As the *bhakta* of Vishnu saw the money of the king he began to tremble all over. O pious good people, listen to what he said to Shivaji then: 102. 'We do not need a store of money. We need Vitthal only. Aside from Him we have no liking for anyone in the world. 103. As one should honour a jeweller with pebbles, in the same way is the offer of gold to us. 104. We had heard of your great reputation and today we have witnessed your generosity. But what we *Vaishnavas* do not like, you have with love laid before us. 105. The money which you have brought to offer us, is to us like beef.' At these determined words the king felt abashed. 106. Tukaram further addressed the king and said, 'If you wish to do something which would satisfy us, then we will tell you a secret. 107. Think only of Vitthal's name and thereby only we shall be happy. Any other fortune to us is like earth, O king. 108. Put a rosary of *tulsi* beads around your neck, and observe the *ekadashi* (every 11th day). We shall be satisfied by that only and not by heaps of money. 109. With love and joy at heart, call yourself the slave of Vithoba. This is our only desire; fulfil it to our satisfaction.' 110. Seeing such freedom from desires, the king wondered in his mind.

and then with sole devotion he prostrated himself before Tukaram over and over again.

SHIVAJI PROTECTED BY KRISHNA

111. That was the day of Hari [*Ekadashi*] and the king was listening to the *kirtan* with love. In the meantime two thousand Pathans were sent by the Muhammadan General (to apprehend Shivaji). 112. The spies of the Muhammadan General told him of the king's arrival into Poona to visit Tuka at night. 113. Then that bad man sent (two thousand) horsemen to arrest him at once. They equipped themselves with various weapons and came running at midnight. 114. They besieged the house in which the *kirtan* was being performed and did not let out anyone from the house. 115. They had orders that they should discover Shivaji and arrest him and bring him out. The king had this intelligence that the army of the enemy had besieged the house. 116. Some advised the king to get up and run away at once. His mind was full of fear and in great perplexity. 117. Seeing the sorrowful commotion of the listeners, Tuka understood the whole thing and he asked them, 'What are you whispering to yourselves? Tell me at once.' 118. On hearing the question of Tukaram, the people who knew replied to him in a low voice, 'A fearful army of the enemy has arrived to arrest the king. 119. Therefore the king must be removed from this place at once. If you permit us to do it, then only will his life be saved.' 120. Thereupon Tuka replied, 'None should go away from the *kirtan*. Such is the rule of religion. Don't you know this? 121. At this the king sat there determinedly and said to himself, 'Aside from the Husband of Rukmini, there is no one in the three worlds who can save or destroy. 122. To-day is the *Ekadashi* festival, an auspicious day. Near me are the *Vaishnava* saints. If I die in the *kirtan*

my fortune will be great.' 123. Outside the army was thinking of apprehending the king without delay. Many spies went into the house but none of them recognized (Shivaji) the king. 124. The spies went to the General and told him that there were many men sitting in the *kirtan* but they did not know which of them was King Shivaji. 125. On hearing his soldiers' message the evil-minded person became hot with anger and said, 'Kill as many men as there are in the *kirtan*. 126. Amongst them the king will naturally be included.' Such was his firm resolve, but Tuka who could understand the hearts of others knew this. 127. Then he brought into his mind the Lord of Pandhari and pleaded with Him in a plaintive manner, 'Victory, Victory to Thee; the Lord of the helpless, the merciful One. Now rush at once to my help. 128. These people here have come to listen to Thy praise-service. They are all fallen into a sudden calamity. Who else aside from Thee will destroy it? 129. Disturbances run away from the place where Thy praise-service is being performed, so the saints have said, but it is about to be falsified. 130. O Life of the world, if Thou art testing my mind, then let me tell Thee that I am not afraid of my death. But the saints and other good people will be full of sorrow and I cannot bear that sight. 131. This (fear) is hereditary with us. Dost Thou not know it, O Husband of Rukmini? An interruption to my service is nothing short of death to me.' 132. Hearing this compassionate pleading, the Life of the world at once arrived there and embraced Tuka and said, 'Continue your praise-service. 133. I will disperse the mighty disturbance of the enemy's army myself. With a quiet heart you continue with love your *kirtan*.'

KRISHNA DISGUISED AS SHIVAJI

134. Saying this, the One beautiful as a cloud, Himself

took the form of King Shivaji, and riding a horse at once came out of the house. 135. The men who sat to listen to the *kirtan* did not know of this event. O pious ones, the *bhaktas* of God, listen to the extraordinarily wonderful story. 136. The Life of the world suddenly appeared near the house in which the *kirtan* was being performed and Himself shouted loudly, 'O the king is running away!' 137. Two thousand Pathan soldiers had besieged the house. They looked before and behind them, and plainly saw the king. 138. For a moment he came within their ken and at once hurried on. The Lord of the world with the army at His back worked a great wonder. 139. The citizens left their beds pell-mell, stood on the terraces of their houses, and talked between themselves: 140. 'The king is running ahead and the Muhammadan soldiers are pursuing him. Now his life cannot be safe. We can clearly see future disaster.' 141. To the spies who were on the lookout in the enemy's army the Life of the world appeared as King Shivaji. 142. Some shouted, 'Here the king is running away; catch him.' The soldiers were in a state of consternation and began to run pell-mell. 143. He was seen near one man but as he attempted to catch hold of him he could see no one. Some thought of killing him instead of running after him. 144. Some cried, 'What are you looking here and there for? Surround him.' Others cried 'Cowards that you are, you cannot take hold of a single brave man. 145. We are two thousand brave soldiers, and that he should escape from amongst us is shameful to us. Why do you carry weapons in your hands? Why not cut your own throats with them?' 146. Some exclaimed, 'We shall catch the king at our leisure when it is day. We cannot see now, then why struggle for nothing?' 147. *Sharangadhar* (God) remained steady for a while in one place, and worked a wonder. He showed Himself at once and shouted 'He is found. Catch him.' 148. The soldiers went in pur-

suit of him, but the Lord of the world could not be caught by them. Sometimes He appeared near them but as they tried to catch Him He escaped far away. 149. It was a bright fortnight and so there was moonlight. With the help of that light the Muhammadans began to run. In the course of three hours they were taken forty miles far away into a dreadful jungle. 150. The Life of the world took the army into a mountainous, very frightful and barren jungle full of prickly shrubs and then returned. 151. All the soldiers looked about them but they could nowhere see King Shivaji. They said, 'We were labouring under a wrong idea, and rushed about at night for nothing.' 152. Some said, 'Our eyes were wandering wildly and glaringly and thereby we were put to trouble for nothing.' Others said, 'We clearly saw him near us.' 153. As they began to return, the moon had set. In the darkness of the night they could see nothing and they could not find their way. 154. They rode one after the other and stumbled. They began to say to one another, 'The prospect is not good.' 155. The brambles rubbed against their persons and their clothes were torn. Some loudly lamented saying their lives were in peril. 156. It was intensely cold and the army was therefore in a perilous condition. They struggled in the barren jungle and their horses ran away. 157. The Life of the world performed a wonder and did not take the life of anyone. The Muhammadans wandered here and there in a naked state and were all overtaken by a great disaster. 158. Their weapons fell from their hands and their horses had already run away in the forest. Their clothes were snatched from them by the thorny bushes and all were in a beggarly condition. 159. In this way, having punished the evil-minded, Chakrapani (Krishna) returned went to the *kirtan* of Tuka and danced full of love. 160. None of the listeners knew what had happened. The Lord of Pandhari had warded off disaster and had per-

formed a great *maya* (illusion). 161. The Life of the world came near Tuka and whispered in his ear all the news, and told him to continue his *kirtan* with love and without any fear in his mind. 162. Then all the audience shouted 'Victory! victory!' and clapped their hands and loudly sang the names of God. The *Vaishnavas* danced in the *kirtan*, and *Vanmali* (Vishnu) was pleased. 163. All the people told the king of the coming of the enemy's army and how it ran away without being opposed. 164. The king wondered and said that the Husband of Rukmini was pleased with him, for an irresistible disaster had come on all. 165. He felt satisfied in this way and continued listening to the *kirtan*. The audience were awake for four watches (12 hours) and it was dawn. 166. Auspicious lamps were waved over the Husband of Rukmini, and the people shouted Hari's names and fell prostrate on the ground full of love. 167. As the king was returning home the men and women in the town accosted him saying, 'Last night we saw one like you running through the town quickly. 168. As the Muhammadans saw him they ran after him; but how you escaped the disaster we very much wonder.' 169. The king wondered at heart and said, 'God's deeds are unfathomable. The merciful Chakrapani (Krishna) has saved me from calamity.'

SHIVAJI OFFERS GRAIN TO TUKARAM

170. One day King Shivaji was thinking to himself, 'If I offer a fortune to Tukoba he does not accept it. 171. Therefore I shall present myself as a humble person and take grain to his house. Otherwise he will not accept my offer of royal food.' 172. With this plan he wore torn clothes, and loading two maunds of grain on a bullock, started to go. 173. As the night had advanced two *ghatikas* (48 minutes) he arrived at Tukoba's house. Tukoba was sitting near the *tulsi* altar with a rosary in

his hand. 174. Just then the king quickly arrived and threw down the sack of grain at the door and said, 'Swami, I have acquired this grain by labour. 175. With devotion I have brought a little to your feet. I am very humble and lowly. Please store this up in your house.' 176. Then the king bowed to him and quickly went away. Tuka knew in his heart the plan the king had adopted. 177. He thought, 'If I tell the king that I have made him out, his love will receive a blow.' Therefore he silently went on repeating the names of God.

TUKARAM'S ADVICE TO HIS WIFE

178. Then he told his wife, 'If we keep the whole of the grain which the king has brought, our good deeds will suffer. 179. Therefore keep only one day's provisions for ourselves and distribute the rest among the Brahmans.' 180. Hearing this, his wife flew into a rage and began to beat her forehead with her hands and said, 'I am unfortunate. 181. A sack of grain came to our house without anyone's asking for it. But he won't let the children eat it. If it is distributed to the Brahmans, what am I to do? How shall I conduct the family affairs? 182. To this he replied, 'How can we have a bigger share than what is stored up for us in our fate?'

A DEAD CHILD COMES TO LIFE IN TUKARAM'S KIRTAN

183. One day Tukoba was performing a *kirtan* with joy in a temple when a very wonderful event took place. Listen to it, O pious ones. 184. The loud sound coming from the beating of the cymbals, the drums, etc., filled the sky. Men and women sat listening to the *lila* (life) of Hari attentively and with respect. 185. A pious man who was a coppersmith came there to listen to the *kirtan*; his son was dangerously sick and he was very uneasy. 186. His wife said to him, 'Don't go to the *kirtan* tonight.' But he did not listen to her and went. 187. After he had

gene the child died and the mother wept bitterly. Then she lifted up the dead body of the child on her shoulders and going to the place where Tukoba was performing a *kirtan* she left it there. 188. Then she addressed Tukaram, 'You have been persecuting us. You have made my husband crazy and made him discard affection and desire. 189. Because he came to listen to your *kirtan* my child died. In our house for a long time past the name of Hari (God) has not been profitable.' 190. Saying this, she rudely placed the child on the floor during the *kirtan*. Thereby the minds of the audience were upset but all sat quiet; 191. just as if a beggar should begin to eat dainty food and some earth should fall upon it, so in the same way when the dead body was brought there the pleasure of the service was dissipated. 192. The people said, 'Hear, O wife of the coppersmith, you have brought the dead body here; but Tukaram does not possess an elixir which would bring the dead to life. Then how is it possible that he can make your child live?' 193. While all the people thus spoke, Tuka replied to them, 'Even divine nectar is nothing before the name of God. It is not obtainable even to Indra and others. 194. If your hearts waver in believing this statement, you will at this very moment experience the truth of it.' Having said this, the *Vaishnava bhakta* worked a miracle. 195. He asked his audience to repeat 'Vitthal, Vitthal' with their lips and told them that it was the real elixir that would bring the dead to life and that they should entertain no doubt about it. 196. As he thus spoke, loud acclamations of the name of Vitthal were heard. It appeared as if the sound of *Brahma* came there and reverberated through the sky. 197. Even the canopy, the pillows and the carpets shouted the name of Vitthal and the pebbles and stones on the earth began to utter the name of Hari. 198. From the musical instruments such as cymbals and banners there emanated the

sound of the name of Vitthal. Gods came in the sky and looked on the scene with eyes full of delight. 199. The knowing and the ignorant, the great and the small, all lovingly cried 'Vitthal.' And all the simple-minded people began to rock themselves with love to and fro. 200. As the people looked at one another they saw in each one the image of Vitthal. They did not notice the presence of different castes. Such was the wonderful state the audience was enjoying. 201. Just then a wonderful event took place there. The dead body sat up alive and just then the people cried, 'Beware.' All of them were wonder-struck. 202. The child's mother was near; feeling satisfied she said, 'I reviled Tuka through ignorance.' 203. All the people saw the wonder and it filled their hearts with faith. They exclaimed, 'There is no mightier nectar than the name of Hari.' 204. In the next chapter the Husband of Rukmini will make me relate a beautiful story. He has placed His assuring hand on the head of Mahipati and in His mercy has housed Himself in Mahipati's heart.

205. *Swasti* (peace) ! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*, listening to which the Lord of the world will be pleased. Therefore listen, O pious ones, to the deeply delightful forty-eighth chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER XLIX

TUKARAM

(Continued)

*Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Husband
of Shri Lakshmi.*

GOD PLEASED WITH ASCETICS

1. Victory to Thee, the Ocean of mercy, the Lord of the world. When Thy worshippers fall into disaster Thou of Thy own accord dost act for them in Thy visible *sagun* form. 2. Thou dost look beautiful all over as a cloud looks. Around Thy waist is the yellow, silk divine garment. On Thy chest is the yellow medal from which shine rays of jems studded on it. 3. Thy yellow crown is of shining gold at whose sight the moon is abashed. In Thy ears shine the yellow crocodile earrings of beautiful form. 4. Around Thy neck is the yellow *mohanmal* (necklace) in the midst of which is the lustrous Kaustubh jewel, at the sight of which Thy loving *bhaktas* have become dazed. 5. On Thy forehead is the yellow saffron spot. On Thy body is the yellow daub of sandalwood paste. Around Thy waist are tiny yellow bells which rivet the eyes. 6. Thy upper garment is yellow. On Thy wrist is the hero's bracelet of yellow colour. Thou art very beautiful with Thy yellow ornaments. 7. On Thy ankles and feet yellow *vaki, todar, wale, and nepur* look very beautiful. Thy *bhaktas* for ever see the lustre of Thy nails. 8. Thy feet which are not obtainable even to Brahmadev and others, are accessible to Thy servants who forget their family life and sing of Thy virtues. 9. An idea of public honour or dishonour never comes in their minds. They have abandoned the public way of behaviour. They who sing without a sense of shame in Thy praise-

service have attained Thee, O Shripati. 10. Those who have heartily forsaken bad desires and equally regard cowdung or gold, and who cherish a dislike for even heavenly happiness, become Thy dear ones; 11. who have given up affection for their bodies and have kicked away the four kinds of salvation; they whose freedom from desires is of this kind they have attained Thee, O Husband of Rukmini. 12. When Thy loving *bhaktas* are in difficulty Thou dost at once assume a *sagun* form. Thou, Merciful to the lowly, dost come to their help without thinking of the favourable or unfavourable time. 13. The *Shastras* and *Puranas* say Thou art in Thy Buddha *avatar* in the *Kali Yuga*; but in opposition to their saying Thou dost become *sagun* at Thy will. 14. Just as a child without heed to time goes to its mother (to be fed), and she out of affection nurses it and is never cruel; 15. in the same way, although it is not time for Thee to assume an *avatar*, Thy loving *bhaktas* call on Thee, and heeding their ardent desire Thou dost at once whisper Thy secrets. 16. My mind takes delight in describing the good qualities of those *Vaishnavas* who are solely devoted to thee and who have made Thee their own. 17. O *Vanamali* (Vishnu), Merciful to the lowly, I have formed an unreasonable longing that Thou wilt sit in my lotus-heart and cause me to describe new and delightful stories. 18. As a father teaches his child the alphabet by holding his hand and by placing pebbles on the ground; in the same way, O Thou, the Husband of Rukmini, Thou dost cause my hand to write this book. 19. Thou didst lift the Govardhan mountain and didst give the glory to the cowherds. In the same way, in order to satisfy my desire Thou dost inspire me to compose this book. 20. I am dull of intellect, O Lord of Pandhari; I am not even able to deliver a message. That through the mouth of such as I am Thou dost describe the stories of Thy *bhaktas* is indeed wonderful. 21. I have not witnessed with my eyes when

and what happened. But if I am in difficulty, Thou comest to help my remembrance. 22. O Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna), Thou art the Enlightener of intellect. I have put all my burden on Thee. Thou dost defeat the pride of self, enabling me to compose the book.

TUKARAM'S FOREST LIFE

23. In the end of the preceding chapter the listeners have heard the story as to how a dead body was brought to life by the names of Vitthal being lovingly repeated. 24. At the sight of that miracle by Tukaram, people began to respect him more and more. Then Tukoba went into the forest and sat contemplating Hari (God) with a complete abandonment of devotion. 25. He considered any hypocritical public honour as dog's dung. He discarded all ideas about honour and sat singing the praises of Hari (God) with concentrated devotion. 26. He went and sat in a secluded place in an unconscious bodily state for which the crooked minded reviled him and called him a devil. 27. He ran away from any place where he heard his praise, and went to sit where he was being censured and listened to it. 28. If anyone offered him dainty food with respect he did not like it, for he had thoughtfully curbed his tongue. 29. But if any poor and humble person offered a simple vegetable food, he ate with love just as much as would sustain his body. 30. He went and sat in the forest of Ballal in seclusion during the day and at night he would come into the town and in love perform *kirtans*. 31. Although he was in his town for two months he did not go home and his wife went from house to house publicly complaining about him.

TUKARAM RETURNS HOME

32. She said, 'Hear, O my friends, my fate is adverse. My husband does not care for me but goes and sits in the forest. 33. He has given up his business and dances in

the *kirtan* with love. He constantly thinks of Purushottam (Vishnu) and as a rule sings His praises. 34. He has been in the town for the last two months but all that time he has never come home. O friends, I am worn out by anxiety day and night. 35. If you ever see him, teach him the morals of religion. He has abandoned his wife, and therefore his life has become disreputable among the people.' 36. She repeatedly complained about him to her neighbours and one day she took a pot and went to fetch water. 37. She filled the pot with water and was going back home when she met Tukoba on his way to the temple after bathing. 38. His wife at once went to him and caught him by the end of his *dhotar*. Listen to what she said to him without any sense of respect: 39. ' You are without any sense of shame and scruple and you dance day and night in the praise services of God. You never come home and on that account I feel so uneasy. 40. On account of public shame I weep bitterly at home. Tell me at once what you mean to do with us.' 41. On this he replied to his wife, 'Your parents married you without any thought of my circumstances; then why should I provide you with food and clothing ?' 42. Then his wife said to Tuka, 'Whose circumstances, then, did they consider ?' He said, 'Of my parents, and they have given you into *their* care.' 43. On this the wife replied, 'Your parents are dead. Where can I go, to find them ? You yourself have cremated them in the funeral ground.' 44. On this the *bhakta* of God said, 'Pandurang is my father, and the Mother of the universe, Rukmini, is my mother. Both of them are for ever imperishable and immovable. 45. They do not grow with the growth of creation and are not destroyed with the destruction of the world. 46. If the sky reflects in a pot of water, and the pot is broken, it cannot be said that the sky is broken. 47. In the same way are my parents. Contemplate their feet in your heart

They will provide you with food and clothes. Have no doubt about it.' 48. The wife then said, 'O lord of my life, now please come home. The revilers will be put to shame thereby. And by your presence our family life will look well. 49. I will worship the feet of Shri Hari (God). Even they will provide food and clothes for me. You sit quietly at home and continue your worship of Shri Hari.' 50. The husband then said, 'If you listen to my advice, and if you give me your word for it, then I will now come home at once.' 51. The wife gave her promise and brought home the *Vaishnava* Tuka. The people wondered very much and began to talk between themselves: 52. 'He made an exhibition of his *vairagya* (asceticism) for a few days, and let his reputation spread, but again he has yielded himself to *maya* (illusion) and has returned to his family affairs.' 53. Some said, 'It is as it ought to be; for spiritual riches are to be truly gained in family life. That Tuka has accepted his wife is a matter of satisfaction to us. 54. Many go and sit in the caves of mountains, but which of them has attained *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven).' In this way the people gossiped without any consideration. 55. Some derided Tuka while some praised him. Some called him the best while others called him the worst. But he disregarded both praise and blame and he was ever full of joy.

TUKA'S ADVICE TO HIS WIFE

56. That day was the day of Hari (*ekadashi*). Tukoba was sitting near the *tulasi* altar. He called his wife near to him and said, 'Listen to the story of Hari (God)' 57. Saying this, he seated her in front of him and took cymbals and *vina* in his hands, and gave her a piece of advice in eleven *abhangs* which the good have already heard. 58. I will bring to my mind the purport of it, and describe it in my uncouth language. But it is as if showing the sun with

the help of a light. 59. Where there is the need of nectar, some physicians give ordinary herds; and in the same way, dull as I am, I am endeavouring to explain the meaning of Tuka's *abhangs*. 60. When dirty rivulets meet with the waters of the Ganges they can no more be described as unsacred. The rust of iron remains no more as soon as it has come into contact with the *paris* (touchstone). 61. For after all, the incomparable expression of saints has a meaning which is very profound; and through their favour I will try and explain a little. Listen to it, O ye good people, with love. 62. Then he (Tuka) seated his wife by his side, and said, 'Consider this human body as a field. If there we remember Hari (God) then by our good fortune the crop will be tremendous. 63. Those who have not ensured the spiritual riches are entirely lost. They have laboured in their family life for nothing, and have merely worn out their bones. 64. Eighty per cent of this we have to pay as revenue to the government, otherwise the officer *Kalaji* (death) will greatly terrify us. 65. Through his fear ten per cent have been paid off, but he does not see the remaining seventy per cent. 66. You are likely to ask what the ten per cent means. If you have a doubt about it, know that they are the ten organs which have been at present worn out. 67. To my ears any sweet praise or bad words are alike; and I look without any sense of difference at gold or earth. 68. To my tongue, sugar or the bitter fruit of *vrindwan* are just the same; and I smell as equal the stinking *pungal* creeper or the fragrant flower of *bakul*. 69. There in the heart is the fickle mind, but it has been steadied at the feet of Vitthal. In the same way are the organs of action which have lost the power of action. 70. In this way the ten have been shaken off as they have become incapable of understanding their own functions. Now I shall give you an account of the remaining seventy which I have.

71. Pandurang (God) is the officer of this place. He sits in the heart's public square and says, "Pay off the remaining revenue. 72. Sell off your pots and your cattle, and with their cost pay off the remaining revenue and bear this thought in your mind and become clean." 73. My darling wife, if we do not pay Him His due, where have we a place to hide in ? Without Him there is no other place. Thoughtfully consider this. 74. He is the Lord of the World. He is the Pervader of the Universe. If we run away from Him through fear, there is no one who can give us shelter. 75. When His servants are behind me, where shall I wander for refuge ? Had I but refused to undertake the cultivation right at the beginning He would not have troubled me like this. 76. Therefore let us pay off the remainder and stay here for ever. Whatever He is pleased to give us as our wages we shall eat. 77. There is no limit to those who have been plundered by Him. They have not come back to enjoy the family life. For fear of Him, nobody is willing to undergo births. 78. The *sadguru* has deprived one of his bodily consciousness and he is totally destroyed. People laugh at him for his disregard to honour and dishonour. 79. He takes those who have passed the test to *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). He was ~~much~~ after me also and then I had to pay for it with my life. 80. I have understood this already, but I ignore the knowledge. I have been found in the hands of Him who has harassed so many with cruelty. 81. Now think well in your mind and be indifferent to worldly things. My life is in peril, then why should you hesitate ? 82. If you have clearly seen this without trouble, then why do you not like it ? Tell me. I have actually to starve, then why cling to any sense of shame ? 83. If I love my own body then I cannot say what will happen to your life. I will adopt a plan which will never separate us. 84. We will live together with all our children. If you will listen to

this advice of mine, there cannot be a talk of separation. 85. Now you might ask what the children will eat. But do not think of that at all. They are destined to get as much food and clothing as is fixed by the Creator. 86. You cut asunder the noose which is around your neck and avoid the eighty-four millions of births and deaths and free yourself from the trouble of living in the womb. I will tell you how to effect it. 87. I will forsake you and run away, then seeing you as my property they will impose it on me. Why, your very hands will come to oppose and attack me. 88. At the sight of the beating of the servants of the god of death I tremble through fear. If you care at all for me, then be generous. 89. What shall I do to my fate? My life and fortune are at stake. But this is not my doing, it is the Lord of Pandhari who likes it. 90. I have been reduced to the state of a beggar but He does not leave me. He has no mercy and I see destruction as sure and certain. 91. We shall drink water out of a dry gourd, and as for food, there are leaves created by God. Therefore with a large heart give away everything. 92. If you form this resolve, then the good people will honour you. Your reputation will spread in the two worlds. Listen how it will be. 93. Think of the cattle as dead through disease. Imagine that the pots have been stolen by thieves. And make your heart so hard as to think that you have no children at all. 94. Overcome all desires and harden your heart. As a simile, I will tell you to make it as hard as adamant and to brace up courage. 95. There is little happiness in the family life. Throw it away. When you experience the supreme joy to satiety, you will have it in a large quantity which even sages like Sanak and others longed for. 96. These mighty disturbances will pass away. The snares of the worldly life will be torn asunder. And eventually we shall enjoy glorious festivals as we walk along the path of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). 97. The

celestial sages will perform the festivals and we shall both be happy. The servants of Vishnu will seat us in a chariot of light studded with gems. 98. Many saints and *Mahants* and *Kinnars* and *Siddhas* will come forward to receive us. They will seat us in the chariot of light, and make a loud clamour by the repetition of God's names. 99. As we shall see our parents there we shall cling to their feet tightly, and there we shall pass our time in telling tales of joy, and will remain with them. 100. If you like to see that wonder of happiness, you must make your heart large; give up the troubles of the family life, and accomplish the acquisition of the supreme spiritual riches. 101. You should make every effort to see God, and don't run after what is perishable. Get up early morning and bathe with repentance. 102. Tomorrow is Monday and the twelfth of the fortnight and a festival. Therefore with a pure heart send for the Brahmans. 103. Make the *sankalpa* (resolve) according to religious rites and have the house plundered by the Brahmans. Do not entertain an anxiety as to how you will obtain it in the future. 104. Pandurang is at our head as our father, mother, friend and a dear and near relative. He Himself will provide everything for us. He will not let us fall into calamity. 105. He is near me. My lengthy description makes Him out to be very far away. You are not blind. You have seen Him and you know all His signs. 106. Pandurang has manifested Himself in my heart and therefore I do not like such happiness as arises from sensual objects. As I see His *sagun* form, all the struggle of my heart is quieted. 107. Worldly people like only two things more than even their own life, viz., gold and woman. As to us, they are worse than pebbles. Do you not know it? 108. My hunger and thirst are satisfied. My friends and relatives, and this forest and the trees in it, are alike to me. 109. I consider joy and sorrow as equal, because the

Husband of Rukmini is near me. The illusion that the sensual objects are imperishable should be cut off and we should only sing the praises of God. 110. Through the favour of the *sadguru*, God made me to utter this. You too with reverence have listened to it; then act now accordingly. 111. The Husband of Rukmini is pleased with me and has accepted me as His own. Now know for certain that there is no other consideration before me. 112. Believe these words and brace up your loins with courage. Without any effort on your part you had the mystic *mantra*. 113. Now sweep the ground clean and sprinkle it with water. Decorate the *tulsi* altar, and worship the casual guests and the Brahmans with devotion. 114. In body, speech, and mind become the slave of the *Vaishnavas* with sole devotion and in love take the names of Vitthal day and night.'

115. The good people know that in the course of my narrative I have taken advantage of the advice of Tuka to his wife as a piece of advice to women in general. 116. *Vaishnava* Tuka uttered only eleven *abhangs*. I have commented upon them in *ovi* verses and have explained them clearly. 117. May the Saints see the original and bring the meaning to their minds. If they behave accordingly they will surely cross over (the ocean of this worldly life). 118. Tuka in fact has advised the seekers after spiritual riches, making his wife as an example. Thereby the snares of earthly life will be severed, and happiness arising from peace will be within one's easy reach; 119. just as seeing the longing of the *chatak* bird, the Husband of Rohini (the moon) rises in the sky. But no one is deprived of its light, for it is equally given to all. 120. Although he has advised his wife, still no one is deprived of its meaning. It is there and will be his who accepts it.

TUKA'S WIFE HAS HER HOUSE PLUNDERED BY THE BRAHMANS

121. As the advice fell upon her ears, her heart

melted; then lovingly she listened to the story of God in the *kirtan*. 122. The praise-service continued, and deeds of Hari (God) were described. In this way they kept awake for four watches of the night, and then when it was dawn auspicious lamps were waved over the Husband of Rukmini. 123. She went to the Indrayani river to bathe and after coming home she sent for the Brahmans. 124. With a pure heart she made the *sankalpa* (resolve), and with her mind free from desires she had her house plundered by the Brahmans. 125. The Brahmans carried away pots, cattle, clothes and grain. Then a *sannyasi* with long matted hair came there, and searched for something in the house. 126. But he could find nothing, therefore he took the ashes from the oven, and smeared his whole body with it; at which all the people laughed heartily. 127. They said, 'At the time of the distribution of the fourteen jems coming out of the ocean, God Shankar (Shiva) got only the deadly poison. In the same way we have seen what sort of luck an unfortunate man has.' 128. After this Tukoba went out. Here in the house his wife was in great concern; for there was not a kernel of grain. 129. The day before she had a fast on account of the *ekadashi* (the 11th day of the fortnight). The children were troubled by hunger. She was worn out by anxiety and did not know what to do.

RUKMINI APPEARS AS A FEMALE MAHAR TO TEST TUKA

130. There was a poor female Mahar of that village. Mother Rukmini assumed her form, and thought of asking for a cloth from Tuka in order to test his devotion. 131. So thinking, the Mother of the universe started out and as she saw Tuka she addressed him thus: 132. 'You have had your house plundered by the Brahmans. I am a female Mahar, and serve you, therefore, O father and mother, if there is anything remaining please give it me.'

133. He saw a female garment drying in the rear of the house. Tuka pulled it down, and gave it to her. 134. The people of the town wondered greatly when they saw this and said, 'He has acted quite unseemingly and has destroyed his family.'

TUKARAM'S WIFE'S COMPLAINT

135. As they reported the matter to his wife she flew into a rage. She said, 'My luck is not in my favour. I have become notorious in the public eye.' 136. In her house her female neighbours assembled she complained to them: 'O my friends, I do not know to whom I should go and tell of my sorrow. I only struggle mentally. 137. For two months past my husband has forsaken me. O dear friends, he does not come to the house even if he is in the town. 138. Three kinds of people ridicule us behind our back or in the face. Therefore yesterday I appealed to him and brought him home. 139. Last night he performed a *kirtan* and allured me. He gave many illustrations; listen to what he said: 140. "Vitthal and Rakhumai are our mother and father. Think of their feet. They will give you food and clothing when you need them, without an effort on your part." 141. I believed his words and had all my money, grain, pots and cattle plundered. And now I am sitting sorrowfully. 142. O friends, I washed my garment and spread it to dry in the rear and you saw that he gave it to the female Mahar. 143. I fed the children by my own labour. As for him, he has good luck, and everything goes on well with him. 144. In this way as I was passing my days I made a mistake in bringing my husband home and have lost everything. 145. I believed his words that if I think of the feet (of Vitthal and Rakhumai) they will give me food and clothing. 146. I thought of them twice or thrice and as a result I saw instant poverty. For lack of food the children are in

trouble. 147. The feet have betrayed me in this way; therefore my mind is on fire. Now I shall go to the temple, hear what I shall do.

TUKARAM'S WIFE GOES TO SMASH VITHOBA'S FEET

148. My husband describes the glory of those feet. Now I will go and break them. So saying she lifted up a stone and started towards the temple. 149-150. She said: 'I will at once smash with a stone the feet of the Husband of Rukmini which Brahmadev and others contemplate and of which Narad and others sing and describe their glory.' With this determination she started towards the main door.

KRISHNA'S ANXIETY

151. Knowing this, the Lord of Pandhari began to tremble all over in the temple. The Merciful to His *bhaktas*, and the Lord of the lowly, showed His *lilā* (deeds) to His servants. 152. He who became a fish and killed the demon Shankhasur in the waters of the ocean, *that* Chakrapani (Krishna) was afraid of the wife of Tuka and therefore trembled. 153. The One who is dark as a cloud became a tortoise, and sustained Mount Mandar on His back. He, seeing the strength of loving devotion, trembled in every limb of His. 154. He who became a boar and suspended the earth on His tusks; that Actor, as in a play and in *Vaikuntha* (Vishnu's heaven), was afraid of His own *bhaktas*! 155. He Who forcefully entered a pillar and tore the demon Hiranyakashipu, He cherished a fear in His heart from His *bhaktas*. 156. King Bali was proud of his giving; then *Vanumali* (Vishnu) became Trivikrama and forced him into the nether world and He trembled all over. 157. He Who was born of Renuka and extirpated the Kshatriyas (the warrior race) from the earth; *that* Chakrapani (Krishna) out of fear from His *bhakta* was trembling. 158. He Who killed the ten-faced demon (Ravana) who had captured all the gods; that

powerful One, the Ornament of His *ohaktas*, trembled through fear. 159. Even Lord Shri Krishna, Who Himself had killed the most powerful demons Kans and Chanur, He was afraid greatly of the wife of Tuka. 160. Chakrapani was covered all over with perspiration at which Rukmini wondered greatly and asked, 'Tell me the concern of Thy mind please.' 161. On this Chakrapani replied, 'The perplexity which has arisen in My mind is that Tuka's wife is coming here full of wrath and with a stone in her hand. 162. She has resolved to break My feet; I do not know what remedy I should adopt to avoid the calamity.' 163. Rukmini said, 'To avert the calamity it is well for Thee to run away from here and come back when the crisis is passed.' 164. On this the Life of the world replied, 'It is not in My power to run away, for I am in the power of My *bhaktas*, and I behave as they command. 165. If a child catches a father by his *dhotar* (cloth), the father cannot get rid of it by force; he stands still out of affection; it is just so with Me. 166. A bee bores a hole in a wood, but it cannot break through a lotus-flower; of its own affection it is shut up in it; such is My condition at present. 167. If we leave this place Tuka's mind will be wounded. He will give away his very life if he does not see My image in a *sagun* form. 168. If I stay here out of regard for him, his wife will come and destroy My feet with a stone and this is My concern.' 169. Tuka's wife was burning with anger and she hastened to the temple. When Tuka saw her he asked her where she was going. 170. His wife said in reply, 'Your father, the Husband of Rukmini, has ruined me as in my heart I thought of His feet. 171. You advised me to think of His feet and that He would provide for me food and clothing, and I obeyed you. 172. I believed your advice and then our house was plundered by the Brahmans. But now my children look so pitiful and helpless, for they get no food or clothes.

173. Such is the disaster which these feet have worked; therefore I am going into the temple to crush them with this stone, to be sure.' 174. As Tuka heard his wife's resolve, his heart melted through affection and he cried, 'You are doing something unseemingly and extraordinary;' and he began to weep copiously. 175. He decided to go along with her and to speak to her in a humble and gentle way that if she was unable to check her wrath, she should dash the stone at him instead. 176. With this thought in his mind he followed her at a quick pace. Knowing this the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Krishna) was perplexed. 177. A little while ago He was trembling, but now He was quiet. At this Rukmini felt greatly astonished and jestingly asked Him, 178. 'O God of gods, the Lord of Pandhara, Thou wast trembling with fear a little while ago. Has anyone come to Thy rescue? I have my doubts. 179. Who is this Thy heart's friend who has come to shield Thee, and therefore Thou, the Lord of *Vaikunth* art now quiet?' 180. Then the Merciful to the lowly said in reply, 'Now there is another more powerful calamity. Pity for Me arose in the heart of our loving *bhakta* Tuka. 181. Knowing that his wife is coming to crush My feet he is following her to request her to throw the stone on himself. 182. Therefore this makes Me forget My own sorrow, and now I feel concerned about him. I am at a loss to know what remedy can be devised to avoid this accident. 183. Hers is an opposing devotion. There is no room for thought or consideration in her mind. She might accidentally strike Tuka. This is My concern. 184. If she strikes his feet and they are hurt, how will he dance in his praise-service? This is My heart's concern.' 185. On this Rukmini replied, 'I do not know why Thou shouldst be so concerned. Even *Kali* (*Kali* age) and *Kāl* (death) tremble at his sight who is favoured with the least of Thy mercy. 186. He with whom the sun is pleased can never be in the

dark; and he who gets a lodging in the ocean of milk is no more hungry. 187. If one is in possession of a life-giving herb, then he is not affected by diseases. So also, when Thy name is on the lips of Tuka, what fear can he have, O Chakrapani? ' 188. No sooner had the Mother of the world said this than the wife of Tuka arrived there. They could see the stone she had on her head as she came to the main door.

RUKMINI SAVES TUKARAM

189. As soon as she went inside the temple, Rukmini closed the door and shut out Tuka. Know why she did so. 190. His wife might strike him out of anger, therefore as soon as she entered the temple Tuka was put outside. 191. In this way the Lord of Pandhari saves His *bhaktas* and wards off their disasters, just as a mother saves her child that is going to touch a burning coal.

RUKMINI PACIFIES THE ANGER OF TUKARAM'S WIFE

192. Tuka thought that the Lord of Pandhari was pleased with his wife and the Husband of Rukmini was displeased with him, and therefore the door was closed. 193. 'The one who is beautiful as a cloud was awake all through my *kirtan* and intended to sleep in order to rest Himself. Because I was going there, and might make a noise. I was shut outside. 194. Is it with the purpose that I should now go home and not disturb His sleep? Or is it because the Husband of Rukmini is displeased with me that the door was shut? 195. Or is my wife's devotion superior to that of mine, and therefore the Life of the world has given her refuge and shut me out?' So thinking he began to weep. 196. If I try to describe the love (of Tuka) at that time the book will be too large. As she (Tuka's wife) lifted up the stone to dash it against the feet (of Vitthal), Mother Rukmini interrupted her by saying, 197. 'What wrong has the Life of the world done, that you have come to

crush His feet? Tell me that without any reserve.' 198. The latter replied, 'Hear, O Mother, once or twice I thought of the feet. But in my house there is no provision even for a single person. All our family life has been ruined. 199. There is not a kernel of grain in the house. The children weep and weep, and therefore my mind is in anger, and I have come to break the feet. 200. Those feet have ruined us, and therefore my mind is in a rage.' As Rukmini heard her story she replied to her, 201. 'I will make good that which might be lacking in your family.' Saying this she gave her a garment, a jacket, and a handful of *hons* (silver coins). 202. The gift satisfied her and she threw down the stone and wore the garment and held the feet of Rukmini. 203. She took the handful of *hons* and came out at once. This most interesting story is continued in the next chapter. May the listeners listen to it with reverence. 204. The Husband of Rukmini sits in my heart, and causes me to speak correctly. Mahipati is His badge-bearer and the slave of His slaves.

205. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. The Lord of the world will be pleased if it is listened to. Therefore, O loving and pious *bhuktas*, listen to this most interesting forty-ninth chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER L

TUKARAM

(Continued)

*Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Slayer of
the demon Pralamba.*

INVOCATION.

1. Victory, Victory to Thee, O Chakrapani, Ocean of mercy, Destroyer of the earthly existence, and Giver of the fourth stage of salvation. Look at me with eyes full of mercy, and free me from the law of works. 2. O Shripati (Vishnu), sever the snares of my desires, make me desireless and indifferent to worldly things, and grant me love for Thy worship. 3. The six enemies of man, viz., anger, pride, malice and others, become irresistibly powerful in me. O Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna), the heart will be cleansed only through Thy mercy. 4. Before me there are great hindrances arising from public etiquette and the sense of honour and dishonour. My mind clings to these and therefore I cannot contemplate Thee. 5. I am full of such bad qualities; still I describe myself in public as belonging to Thee. But be proud of this (false assertion of mine), and save me, sinful as I am, O Shri Hari. 6. The mind is very fickle and I only wish that it should be steadied at Thy feet for ever, O Pandurang, Thou knowest my heart. 7. My hands wish to worship Thee in the sixteen ways. So satisfy them and fulfil their wish. 8. O Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven), I should see Thee alone in the moveable and immoveable creation. O Shripati, make me so that doubts and hatred will never arise in my heart. 9. The use of the feet will only be accomplished when they go on a pilgrimage of Thine and dance (in Thy praise-service)

without a sense of shame and bodily pride. 10. I should describe the fame of Thy *bhaktas* only, O Husband of Rukmini. This is my heart's desire, and therefore I implore Thee, O merciful One. 11. I have formed a seemingly impossible wish that Thou wouldst cause me to compose the delightful narrative, so that as soon as it falls on the ears of the loving listeners they may be satisfied.

12. At the end of the previous chapter it is related that Tuka's wife went to the temple and that Mother Rukmini was pleased with her and, as good fortune would have it, spoke to her. 13. As Tuka's wife received a garment, a jacket and a handful of *hons* (silver coins) she was satisfied. She was wonder-struck to see that the image of stone spoke. 14. She wore the garment and bowed to Rukmini. Tuka knew of the event as she came out.

TUKARAM'S ADVICE TO HIS WIFE

15. Tuka said to his wife, 'You were very impatient and thereby you lost the benefit of the spiritual riches' Listen to my explanation. 16. If we use the crop as it grows, the grain will eventually fall short. If we eat the cream on the milk, where can we get butter from? 17. If we suck up all the sugarcane, how shall we get sugar? Advise your mind in this way and give away the *hons* (silver coins) to the Brahmins. 18. Though we give away a bead of glass we obtain a pearl. Therefore encourage your heart and be indifferent to worldly things. 19. Though we heartily let go the firefly the sun comes to our house. Though we neglect a pond of water the ocean come up to us. 20. Though we do not use lovingly the garlands of red and black berries we shall in future obtain precious gems. Though we disregard drugs we shall in future obtain the sweet divine nectar. 21. Though we disregard the *siddhis* (accomplishments personified), we come across a wish-tree. By leaving the company of bad

men we meet with a *sadguru*, then why not give these *hons* away? 22. In the same way, if you drive away from your heart *riddhi* (prosperity), *siddhi* (accomplishments), wealth, and fortune, then you will be absorbed into Brahm (the home of salvation) which even the gods wish for in their minds.' 23. Hearing these illustrations the wife of Tuka was satisfied. She at once sent for the Brahmins and gave them the *hons*. 24. Discard avarice and affection and remember the Lord of Pandhari.

DEV OF CHINCHWAD AND TUKARAM

Now, O listeners, listen with attention to the extraordinarily wonderful story which took place after the above event. 25. Tuka's reputation spread very widely. The great honoured him and the people began to say among themselves that the Husband of Rukmini dined with him. 26. Dev of Chinchwad heard of this and it became unbearable to him. He said, 'I am a Brahmin, the highest of all castes, and I have propitiated Ganpati. 27. Tuka is by caste a Shudra, and has the business of a grocer. That Chakrapani (Krishna) dines with him is clearly an unprecedented wonder. 28. Therefore let me call him here and witness some evidence of this rumour.' So he thought in his mind and Tuka knew it. 29. Said he, 'The great Brahmin of Chinchwad has thought of me. So let me go that far and pay reverence to him.' 30. With this intention he at once started. He visited the god whose vehicle is the mouse (Ganpati) and sat near Dev (the Brahmin). 31. As he saw Tuka he thought to himself, 'What I intended has easily come to pass. So let me see the wonder with my own eyes.' 32. It was midday and all the Brahmins sat in a row to dine. He also gave a plate to Tuka. 33. The worshipper of Vishnu (Tuka) said to Dev, 'The Lord of Pandhari is my Companion. He will come to dine here, therefore lay one

more plate. 34. You also request *Gajavadan* (the elephant-faced-God, Ganpati) to come and dine here. ' As Dev heard these words he was surprised. 35. Said he (to himself), ' This is very well, indeed. My own trick has come home to me. ' Then he went to the god-room, and joined his lotus-hands palm to palm before Him (Ganpati), 36. and praised Him in various ways, but Ganpati would not come to dine. In the absence of devotion, of what use is the skill of the *Shastras*? 37. Outward worship with a bad and a wandering heart will not please any god. 38. The Lord of *Vaikunth* was pleased with the *Gajendra* (elephant). Did he know any *Shastras*? God saved cowherdesses without number just on account of their loving devotion. 39. The feet of Shri Krishna were far from them, who followed the law of works according to religious rites. The wives of *Rishis* carried food to Shri Krishna and the Life of the world met them. 40. The Merciful to the lowly yielded to these *bhaktas*, who were simple in heart full of devotion and loving. The One dark as a cloud at once listened to the call of the cowherds for play. 41. Well, what is the good of talking at length? The noble *Vaishnavas* know the secret. With their pure heart they made the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna) their own. 42. Then the Brahmanas said to Tuka, 'How will an image of stone dine? As we offer food to the elephant-faced god (Ganpati) the smell of it goes to Him. '

GANPATI RESCUES A MAN FROM DROWNING

43. On this the noble *Vaishnava* replied, 'The Destroyer of disasters (Ganpati) is not among the other images. If you doubt this, lend me your ear for explanation. 44. A worshipper of His was on the point of being drowned as he was bathing in the waters of the sea. He prayed to *Ekdant* (the one-tusked god, Ganpati) to rush to his rescue. 45. To

pull him out, *Vinayak* (Ganpati) has gone there. If you want an evidence of what I say, then wait a while. 46. When Gajavadan (Ganpati) was not in the shrine, to whom did you offer the food ?' Dev (the Brahman) was surprised to hear Tuka say this. 47. Presently they witnessed a wonder with their own eyes. The image of Ganpati on the throne was dripping with water. 48. As they wrung the yellow silk garment, the water of the sea tasted salt. That miracle was simply marvellous and at that sight all began to wonder. 49. The Brahman (Dev) asked Tuka, ' Why is the silk garment wet ?' On this the noble *Vaishnava* replied, ' The Destroyer of hindrances (Ganpati) has now returned here. 50. He had rushed to the rescue of His *bhakta* as he was being drowned. He was safely put on the shore and then Ganpati returned.' 51. As Dev heard Tuka's words, he greatly wondered at heart and said, ' The procedure of the *Vaishnavas* is simply wonderful and beyond our knowing.' 52. Further the Brahman said, ' How did you know that the Son of Parvati (Ganpati) had gone to the sea ? And how were you able to give evidence of it ?' 53. But he himself (Dev) answered this question: ' He has worshipped the Husband of Rukmini, and therefore he knows the ways of all other gods. 54. When the sun favours one, what will he not see ? When one sees a garden of wish-trees, one's desires do not remain unfulfilled. 55. If one inhabits the ocean of milk, he will no more be troubled by hunger and thirst. If a seeker after spiritual riches obtains nectar, he is not in need of drugs. 56. In the same way if the Lord of Pandhari favours one, then all other gods cling to him, just as in looking at the moon, one sees all the stars.'

GANPATI DINES WITH TUKARAM

57. In this way Dev spoke indirectly. On this the *Vaishnava* Tuka said, ' Seeing my pure devotion the

Lord of Pandhari has come to dine. 58. Now you call Ganpati and let us clearly see Him dine.' As Dev heard these words he was silent. 59. The noble Brahman then said to Tuka, 'You have implored the Husband of Rukmini to come to dine! Then feed with love the Destroyer of hindrances (Ganpati) in His row.' 60. 'Very well.' Having said this, he had a plate served with food by him. Then he approached Ganpati and joining his hands palm to palm prayed to Him: 61. 'Victory, victory to Thee, O *Lambodara* (Thou with the big belly, Ganpati), the Ocean of the fourteen sciences (see note on p. 145, Vol. I), seeing Thy *tandava* dance, the delight of the Husband of Uma (Shiva) could not contain His heart. 62. At Thy very sight, hindrances at once take to their heels. If one lovingly experiences this with his own eyes, the meshes of the earthly existence are cut asunder. 63. Now I pray Thee to eat the offering of food with love.' Ganpati consented to his prayer and began to dine. 64. Near one plate was the Husband of Rukmini and near Him was Ganpati. Both of them came for the love of Tuka. 65. But they were not visible to anyone while the food on the plates was being consumed. Dev (the Brahman) felt surprised at this wonderful sight. 66. He said, 'We worshipped Ganpati, but he never before has dined in our presence. But Tuka has worked out this *līlā* (a great wonder), and all of us are surprised. 67. As for the dining of Ganpati, it cannot be called unprecedentedly wonderful, for the Lord of Pandhari Himself has come to dine, which is impossible to a mere seeker of spiritual riches. 68. When the ocean is in one's possession who will care for the rivers? In the same way if the Husband of Rukmini favours one, then all other gods are pleased. 69. As the wish-cow comes to one's house, all other ordinary cows naturally come there. In the same manner, at the sight of the moon all stars are seen.

70. That Lord of the world who is difficult to be seen by the *Yogis*, even by those who sit in the *vajrasan* posture, (on spiked beds), He in His *svagun* or human form comes to the help of His *bhaktas* in difficulties.' 71. In this way the Brahman (Dev) praised Tuka and said, ' Tuka is a loving *Vaishnava bhakta*. He has made the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu) his own, who is unobtainable to Brahmadev and others. 72. Then Tuka took water to clean his hands and ate *pansupari*. He stayed overnight there and performed a *kirtan*. Then taking leave of Dev (the Brahman), he started back to his own town. 73. First he bowed to Ganpati and then with his hands joined palm to palm he requested Dev to grant him leave to return to Dehn. 74. On this the Brahman requested him saying, ' Please let us see you here again. I will send you a message and then you come here with love.' 75. 'By all means,' replied the *Vaishnava bhakta* who at once departed.

A FARMER GIVES TUKARAM SUGARCANE

As he came near his town, a farmer came to him. 76. He prostrated himself before Tuka and requested him with joined hands, ' In my field the sugar-mill is working. Therefore please come as far as there.' 77. Seeing his good intention Tuka consented. And as he came into the field the farmer was very pleased. 78. He gave him a folded blanket to sit upon, and said, ' Blessed is my luck, for the Merciful to the lowly has come into my farm.' 79. Then he cut some sugarcane into pieces and gave Tuka the middle pieces. But Tuka had no taste for them. 80. For he who has tasted the juice of Brahm will never like other juices; just as in the sunlight, other lamps look without lustre. 81. One who is engrossed in spiritual knowledge, will he listen to the doctrines of an atheist? When one has in his possession a wish-cow, who will care to have goats? 82. So when one takes a liking for

the name of God, other things to him are tasteless; therefore he did not know the proper taste of sugarcane. 83. But taking into consideration the good intention of the farmer he sat there for a while. Then the farmer brought some sugarcane juice in a clean pot for him to drink. 84. At the time of departure the farmer requested Tuka to take some sugarcane home for his children. 85. The farmer made a bundle of sugarcane and gave it to him. Taking it on his shoulder, Tuka set off. 86. As Tuka entered Dehu the children of the town asked him for sugarcane which he gave them, for he did not differentiate between his own and those of others; 87. just as to a lamp the master of the house and a thief are alike; or just as the sun shines equally on a prince and a pauper; 88. or just as the river Ganges makes no difference between a mango and a *babhl* tree which grow on its bank; 89. or just as on the earth there live both an ant and an elephant, but the earth is neither glad nor sorry, for it considers both of them alike; 90. or as there are innumerable water-animals in the ocean day and night, but the ocean shows no difference; 91. or as the moon at the time of the full moon shines alike on all; so also was Tuka's disposition; the marvellous state of his mind was incomparable.

TUKARAM'S WIFE BEATS HIM WITH SUGARCANE

92. He did not think of carrying the sugarcane to his house; for he was the friend of all beings; he had the same eye for the moveable and the immoveable. 93. After distributing the sugarcane among the children, there remained only one for him to carry home and when his wife saw it she flew into a rage. 94. The noble *Vaishnava* entered his house and spoke gently to his wife, but she returned harsh words in reply to him: 95. 'You distributed the sugarcane to other boys; did your own older children have the satisfaction of receiving it? At home our own children look so pitiful

for lack of food.' 96. Then she beat him on his back with the sugarcane and it broke into three pieces. Two of them fell on the ground and one remained in her hand. 97. In his usual quiet way the *Vaishnava* Tuka addressed his wife: 'Now the sugarcane is equally divided, because Pandurang is our Helper. 98. Your portion is in your hand. Two have fallen down and I shall lovingly divide them between myself and the children.' 99. The wife was astonished at this peace of his and said, 'He has become shameless and given up all thought for his family life. 100. Now what is the good of my clinging to affection for our family life and worrying him for nothing? He has given up all thought for family life and is indifferent to honour and dishonour.'

TUKA'S INCOMPARABLE PATIENCE

101. Thus thinking, his wife was silent. No simile can be found to describe Tuka's patience. 102. Then Mahipati thought for a while, and searched in the descriptions of ancient *bhaktas*. Among these he came across the story of the miser* in the eleventh part of the *Bhagwat* which was related to Uddhava by Shri Krishna. 103. The good people might have heard it from the commentary of Eknath. That place of the miser can be a fitting object for comparison with Tuka's peace. 104. But even this simile is inadequate, for the miser had become a *sannyasi* first and then came his persecution. 105. But the *Vaishnava bhakta* Tuka, although a householder, considered honour and dishonour alike. Even if his own wife beat him he was not at all angry. 106. Therefore I say that no simile can describe him. Can an ordinary ocean be compared with the ocean of milk? 107. Just as the fourth state of salvation (absorption), cannot be compared with the other states of salvation. Such was Tuka's

*See *Bhikshugita*, vol 3 in this series of 'Poet Saints.'

extraordinary state. May the fortunate listeners know it. 108. He who in the *Kali Yuga* posted a banner in *Vaikuṇṭh* (Vishnu's heaven) with his mortal body, that loving *bhakta* of God, the chief of the *Vaṣṇavas*, naturally became the *guru* of the world. 109. But it is useless to call him 'the great, the great.' What is the use of calling the ocean deep? Is it so for once only, and never otherwise? 110. Why should we say again and again that the sun is extraordinarily bright? We need not speak again and again of the moon as cool. 111. If we describe the forbearance of the earth, has it newly become so? No, it is naturally so. Then what is the good of praising it with one's lips? 112. In the same manner, Tuka was adorned for ever by thoughtfulness and peace of mind. Who is able to describe it? Only the knowing and holy ones understand it.

HIS BODILY, VERBAL AND MENTAL PENANCE

113. His bodily, verbal and mental penances were without comparison. Even when his very life was at stake he did not tell a falsehood. 114. We have described his verbal penance. Now listen to his mental penance. He had the same kindness for all beings without any distinction. 115. We described in short the mental penance of Tuka; and the bodily penance is effected by obliging others in bodily labour. 116. These three were the proper ornaments of Tuka. He walked to Pandharpur lovingly. 117. He made it a rule on the *Ekadashi* day of the fortnight to go to Pandharpur. He stayed at the temple of God for a day and started back the next day. 118. As he was going to Pandharpur he sang and danced in love and reached there on the seventh day. He remained there for three nights and then returned home.

TUKARAM IS AFFECTED BY MALARIA

119. In this way three years passed and after this he

was affected by malaria. Then seeing himself without strength he was much troubled. 120. He could not walk a single pace and he said to himself, 'The going to Pandhari is lost to me. I had in store some bad deeds in my former lives and therefore this interruption has arrived.'

TUKARAM'S LETTER TO VITHOBA

121. At that time the *Warkaris* (special pilgrims) were going as pilgrims to Pandhari and by them he sent a letter to Pandhari. 122. The *Vaishnava bhuktas* have heard the explanation of those twenty *abhangs*. If they are listened to lovingly, love for God is impressed on one's heart. 123. Bringing to his mind the image of Pandurang he said, 'O God of gods, the Husband of Rukmini, I have not the good fortune to pray to Thee in person. 124. But I make myself bold and write a letter with love. Even the *Vedas* and *Puranas* do not know Thy limit, then how can I describe Thee, sinful as I am? 125. But, O *Chakrapani* (Krishna), accept my uncouth speech. I made myself too familiar with Thy feet but I place my head on them. 126. Thou art the highest of all gods. O Madhava (Vishnu), Thou art the Lord of the cowherdresses in Thy *sagun* form. All describe the fame of Thy generosity and the glory of Thy good fame in the three worlds. 127. O *Hrishikeshi* (Lord of the heart), Thou destroyest heaps of sins by Thy name alone. By its power one's bad deeds will easily burn up, and one will not see poverty. 128. O Vithabai, all happiness clings to Thy feet. When *riddhi* (prosperity) and *shiddhi* (the accomplishments) become favourable, the four states of salvation become our slaves. 129. The position which is difficult to obtain, even to Indra and others, that becomes obtainable to Thy *bhaktas* through the knowledge of Thy love and by dancing with delight in Thy praise service and clapping the hands with joy.

130. There are many dull persons in the world and Thou, O Husband of Rukmini, art the life of these. But the store of my former deeds is not good and therefore Thou dost not invite me. 131. Art Thou treating me with indifference because Thou didst not get my message? And therefore didst Thou naturally become unkind and so hast left me here? 132. Or is there something more urgent for Thee, and so hast forgotten me, O Govinda? I have been anxiously waiting for Thee, O Mukunda. Show me Thy feet. 133. Or Thou didst think that something must be given to me as a gift? Perhaps this was the difficulty in Thy way, and therefore Thou hast neglected me and hast not sent me an invitation, O Vitthal. 134. If Thou hadst such a reserved mind, then why didst Thou give birth to children? To whom shall we go, and open our mouth to beg? 135. If Thou dost leave me, who is there to care for me? O Pandurang, who aside from Thee will do away with my fatigue? 136. Whom shall I wait for? Who is my dear friend? O *Shriranga* (Krishna) if Thou dost leave me, then how will this earthly life be destroyed? 137. Who will understand the trouble of my heart without my telling it? Apart from Thee I do not see anyone before or behind who will do away with my trouble. 138. O God of gods, the Husband of Rukmini, what wrong didst Thou see in me, and so mercy does not arise in Thy heart for me, and therefore Thou hast given me up, O merciful One? 139. At last look once at me. I do not wish to put Thee to an expense. I am muttering Thy names repeatedly day and night. 140. Whatever I may obtain by my fate, the same, whether solid or liquid, I will eat and pass my time, and give up the uneasiness of the heart. 141. But O Lord of Pandhari, I am resolved not to put my burden on Thee. Thou dwellest in the temple of my heart and knowest what is there. 142. But by nature we children long to see Thee,

therefore, O Husband of Rukmini, I am uneasy at heart. 143. Perhaps Thou hast a large number of children and Thou dost not like their peevish complaining, therefore Thou hast become cruel and hast abandoned me? 144. We children are quarrelsome and quarrel with Thee, O Husband of Rukmini. Hast Thou on that account given me up, O merciful One? 145. Or has Thy family become too large to support, and therefore Thou dost unkindly let Thy daughters remain at the homes of their husbands? 146. Or, O Lord of the World, didst Thou do suffer a loss in Thy trade, and so with a narrow mind hast put me in this disaster? 147. Or didst Thou lose credit with the public, and are Thy creditors dunning at Thy door and therefore, O Shri Hari, Thou hast forgotten me? 148. Well, if Thou hadst not anyone to send to give the invitation, Thou couldst at least have sent a message. That would not have cost Thee anything. Thou didst not like to accept this dry way of behaviour. Perhaps Thou art afraid at heart. 149. O Lord of the world, if Thou hast forsaken me, then who is Thy store for? Why dost Thou behave so niggardly that Thou dost not like the sight of Thy children? 150. Thou dost not like to speak just one word by Thy mouth, and thus accept thanks. Then to whom wilt Thou give the fortune which Thou hast so carefully kept? 151. Thy own children are not happy. By constant crying they feel hungry. Therefore act in such a way as will increase Thy reputation. 152. Please do not wait for our curse; it will do Thee no good. Therefore think well at heart and take care of the lowly. 153. Otherwise I will leave nothing reserved in my heart. I will disclose everything to the saints and rob Thee of all Thy gain. 154. I utter Thy name night and day, but I never again will utter it if Thou dost become so indifferent and dost make our longings vain, O merciful One. 155. Thou art the Lord of the world, so powerful, while we are born

of Thee and yet are stricken with poverty. In this way Thou hast become notorious and wilt suffer disgrace in the world. 156. Then what is the good of sustaining life in a place where we do not obtain food to eat and have no invitation from our mother to come home? 157. But O Husband Rukmini, at least remember me in the future, and send me some word. I am pining with sorrow day and night, therefore do not be unkind. 158. My life is in my throat and my mind has gone to cling to Thy feet. My heart is impatient to see Thee. 159. I am laying before Thee the difficulties of my family life, and as I am singing Thy praise I am waiting for Thee. Therefore look at me with a merciful eye and send for me at once. 160. I cannot have patience even for the twinkling of an eye. How can my mind be steady? I restrain it over and over again, but it is not pure. 161. I am in such a condition. Thou knowest, O Pandurang. Therefore O Husband of Rukmini, cut asunder my earthly life. 162. I have never heard that Thou dost neglect Thy suppliants. Therefore I am thinking of Thy feet and lay my head on them. 163. I do not know when Thou wilt do what is proper. But I try to keep my heart tranquil and I sing Thy praises day and night. 164. O Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna) give ear to this request of mine and send me the invitation. I shall be waiting till the *Warkaris* (pilgrims) come back. 165. Then I will go to receive them and devotedly lie prostrate at their feet, and will ask them the result of my message and what reward Thou hast sent for me? 166. The step of the main door there is lying undisturbed and in the same way the saints will tell Thee of my prostrate *namaskar*. 167. If one should leave a stick standing without support it will of itself fall flat on the ground; in the same way the saints will tell Thee, O Lord of Pandhari, about my prostration (before Thee). 168. The saints will tell Thee that my prostrate *namaskar*

is like an obstinate child rolling on the ground when persistently asking its mother to fulfil its wish'.

TUKARAM'S MESSAGE BY *WARKARIS*

169. Tuka then requested the *Warkaris* (pilgrims) as follows : 'Ask the god: "Why hast Thou cast away Tuka in a forest? And what is his fault? 170. Have pity for him in Thy mind." Then ask Him how many wrongs Tuka has done, and therefore why He has cast him away. 171. "Hast Thou forsaken Tuka, because he is not able to come to Pandhari, and is not able to see Thy parallel feet on the brick? For what reason hast Thou forsaken him?" 172. Then if the Lord of Pandhari mercifully calls me there, then I will come running, for I shall see the saints there. 173. The three kinds of fever which are in my mind will at once run away when I sing songs of Thy good deeds, and dance in the sandy bed there. 174. I shall come before my Mother and suck her breast. Listen to my pleading words and send me the message quickly. 175. O Ocean of mercy, the Life of the world, do not think of my merits or demerits. Destroy all my sins and show me Thy feet. 176. O *Hrishikeshi* (Lord of the heart), art Thou not able to destroy my sins, and therefore hast cast me away with cruelty in a foreign land? 177. O Husband of Rukmini, as I hear of Thy reputation I feel penitent day and night. When I see Thee, surely Thou wilt intensely love me. 178. O Life of the world, my tongue is not able to describe Thy qualities. My mind has become impatient to taste the nectar of Thy love. 179. But the time is not favourable to me and I am sorrowing for nothing. My sorrow will increase in future, and there will be wrong thoughts which I shall not be able to resist. 180. O Shri Hari, Thou knowest my mind, therefore do what Thou likest. I have given up all uneasiness of heart and have become quiet. 181. But if Thou forsakest

me, then there will be a curse on Thee, and, O *Adhokshaja* (God), if Thou diest, I shall be an orphan. 182. Therefore I am sending Thee my blessing now, that I, O Husband of Rukmini, may live happy and that Thou mayest some time have mercy for me and accept me. 183. Although Thou forsakest me at a distance, still Thou wilt inquire after me. When Thy heart does not contain affection for me, then Thou wilt show me my mother's home. 184. O Ocean of mercy, Lord of the world, now listen to my request. Do as thou wilt, and henceforth I will not cry in complaint. 185. O Lord of Pandhari, send me Thy message just as Thou dost prefer. Whatever I have spoken, knowingly or unknowingly, forgive me that wrong, O *Ananta* (infinite One). 186. At first Thou didst treat me, Thy child, with indulgence, and didst fulfil my wishes. Now grant me a sight of Thee and destroy the disturbance of the snare of earthly existence.' 187. Tuka wrote such compassionate words and sent the letter by the hands of the *Warkaris* (pilgrims).

MAHIPATI DEFENDS HIS OWN LITERARY METHOD

Listeners should not feel troubled by this lengthy description. 188. You might say that I deviated from the relation of the regular story, that I have made the book too large unnecessarily, and that in the fit of intense delight and love, I was not mindful of any sense of proportion. 189. But it is not quite like that. I have not enlarged the book for nothing. I simply looked at the *abhāṅgs* in the letter and commented on them in brief. 190. My talent falls short in describing Tuka's love. A painter may draw the sun, but he is not able to depict the light. 191. A river may overflow, but it cannot vie with the ocean. A cow giving a large quantity of milk cannot be compared with a wish-cow. 192. Brass may shine from a distance, but it cannot become pure gold. The

power of nectar cannot be found in medicinal herbs. 193. The peacock dances at the sight of the cloud, but if the peahen tries to do the same there is a vast difference between them. The knowing ones understand this. 194. In the same way, in describing the love of Tuka, all my talent has become wearied. At the rise of the sun, all the stars become invisible. 195. If musk falls on the earth, it will be sold at the same rate as musk. Similarly my composition has been sanctified without effort in praising the saints. 196. Well, let us resume the thread of our narrative. The *Vaishnavas*, the pilgrims, started for Pandhari and Tuka sent by them the letter which he had written in love. 197. Then the *Warkaris* (pilgrims) bade farewell to Tuka and took the way to Pandhari, the narration of which the clever *bhaktas* should listen to with intense love in the next chapter; 198. just as a miser while counting his money does not let his mind be divided; or as a crooked-minded person becomes absorbed in the censure of another person; 199. Likewise, if the listeners pay attention with love to this story, the Husband of Rukmini will be pleased. Therefore Mahipati requests the listeners to listen to the narrative with devotion.

200. Swasti (Peace)! This is the *Bhaktavijaya* book, by listening to which the Lord of the world will be pleased. Therefore, O pious and loving *bhaktas*, listen to this very delightful chapter fifty.

CHAPTER LI

TUKARAM

(*Continued*)

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to Shri Gopal Krishna.

MAHIPATI'S PRAYER TO GOD

1. Victory, victory to Thee, O *Hrishikeshi* (Lord of the heart). Merciful to the lowly, Dweller in the hearts of Thy loving *bhaktas*, Husband of Rukmini, the Lord of Pandhari, the Prime Cause of all, and the *Guru* of the world.
2. Victory, victory to Thee, whose *lilā* (voluntary deeds) are those of an actor in a play, Holder of the strings of the universe, Store of good qualities, the Lord of the *Yada-ras*. Thinking in her heart of Thy feet, the daughter of the ocean (Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth) has become Thy suppliant. 3. O Knower of the heart, Pervader of the moveable and the immoveable, Primal Form of the universe, possessing form but without the three qualities, Giver of the promise to Pundalik, the supreme Lord! Victory to the Indestructible, Who exists as *Atmarupa* (in the form of the soul)! 4. Victory to Thee, O Ocean of mercy, Lord of *Vaikunth*, O Thou of immense form, who didst appear as *Vaman* (the dwarf) and as *Parashuram* (holder of the axe). Thou didst remove from the earth the *Kshatriyas* (the warrior caste) and didst establish the *Brahmans*. 5. Victory to Thee, Destroyer of the demons, Founder of religion, Lord of the worlds, Father of *Brahmadev*, Relative and Friend of Thy loving *bhaktas*, for aside from Thee they have no one else. 6. Should I attempt to praise Thee by my own mouth, my intellect has not sufficient inspiration. If I should think of worshipping Thee with love, I have not the means. 7. Should I think of visiting the sacred places in repentance, my

body has lost its strength. Should I think of giving to deserving persons, I lack money. 8. If I should think of practising religious rites, my life becomes uneasy through hunger. If I think of bowing down to all beings, their good and bad qualities arise in my mind. 9. O Shripati, if I wish to study the *Shastras*, my life is not in my power. If out of repentance I think of giving up worldly affairs, *vairagya* (the ascetic spirit) does not possess my mind. 10. If I think of meditating on Thee all alone, my reason cannot control my fickle mind, and instead of thinking of Thy form it wanders everywhere. 11. If I wish to restrain my senses, my tongue is not in my control. So am I environed by bad qualities. Thou knowest this secret of my heart. 12. Therefore, O Husband of Rukmini, I pray to Thee. As Thou lovest Thy *bhaktas*, grant me Thy loving inspiration to describe the fame of their good qualities. 13. With body, speech and mind I ask for the gift of this favour only. Aside from this I have no other wish. Therefore fulfil my desire.

TUKARAM'S SICKNESS AND LETTER

14. O listeners, you hearkened with reverence to the beautiful story in the preceding chapter how Tuka with his heart full of love sent a letter (to Vithoba) 15. Taking this letter of twenty-four *abhangs*, the *Warkaris* (special pilgrims) at once started on their way to Pandhari. As they marched on their way, waves of delight arose in their hearts and they wagged their heads to the loud clamour of the praise (of God). 16. Thus happy in each other's company the *Vaishnavas* arrived at Pandharpur. All others (at Pandharpur) as they saw them bowed prostrate at one and the same time at their feet. 17. They embraced each other and from their eyes flowed tears of joy. They lovingly waved lights over Shripati (Vithoba). 18. Then

choirs with bannere in their hands came to the bank of the Chandrabhaga and after bathing they performed their daily worship. 19. They visited the tomb of Pundalik, went round the sacred town, and with very many cymbals and drums they danced in full delight. 20. Then the noble *Vaishnavas* arrived at the chief door of the temple and as they saw before them the eagle platform they prostrated themselves before it. 21. The *Vaishnavas* began to sing the *abhangs* in the letter written by Tukaram. Hearing this piteous plea the Husband of Rukmini was overcome with grief. 22. Tuka was not in good health, so the Lord of the heart was uneasy; as is a doe at seeing her young one caught by a hunter in a net; 23. or as a mother feels uneasy when she sees her child suffering from smallpox; similarly, hearing Tuka's letter, the Life of the world became uneasy. 24. As the water-deities dry up the water the fish struggle; in the same way, hearing the pitiful cry of Tuka, the Recliner on the Serpent *Shesha* was disturbed; 25. or as a miser is disturbed in mind on learning that his hoard of money is being watched by a thief, so was the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna). 26. Then the Lord of *Vaikunth* addressed Rukmini thus: 'I feel anxious about Tuka's condition, therefore I am overcome with sorrow in my mind; and tears stream from my lotus-eyes. 27. All the *Warkaris* (pilgrims) have come, and Tuka alone is missing from among them, therefore I do not feel at all happy. 28. We might go away from here, were it not that so many people have come; so I ask you as to how we should act.'

GARUD TAKES VITHOBA'S REPLY TO DEHU

29. On this Rukmini replied: 'Send Garud (the Eagle) to bring Tuka here. He will seat him on his back and in less than a moment will bring him here. 30. When we possess so much power, why should we feel anxious at

heart ?' At this reply the Lord of the heart was gratified. 31. Then having called the Son of Vinata (the Eagle), the Lord of Pandhari ordered him this : ' Go at once to Dehu, and do this.' 32. Then taking a pen, the Life of the World began to write a letter. Oh you simple, good people, listen to it piously. 33. He said : - ' As long as *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) and *Kailas* (Shiva's heaven) are in existence, may Tuka live and for ever remember me with love in the temple of his heart.' 34. As Vithoba sent this blessing (to Tukaram), Rukmini felt astonished at heart and said, ' These words from your lips can never be untrue.' 35. Pandharinath smiled silently and His heart could not contain His intense love (for Tuka). Then he wrote to Tuka: 'I feel so sorry at hearing of your strange sickness. 36. If you want to know how sorry I feel, your own heart will bear witness to it. For as the *Warkaris* (pilgrims) communicated to me your message, I became quite troubled at heart. 37. In fact, I ought to rush to meet you; but the pilgrims have assembled here in large numbers and so I have sent my Eagle there (to you) to fetch you here without fail. 38. Therefore without any reserve at heart sit on his back and come to Pandhari without losing a moment and meet me here at once.' 39. Having written thus, the Life of the world addressed the Eagle : 'Considering Tuka as Myself, seat him on your back and bring him here.' 40. 'By all means,' said the Eagle and placing his head at the feet (of Vithoba) he replied, ' He to whom my *Swami* (Lord) has given refuge, deserves to be bowed down to by me. 41. When Saraswati (the goddess of learning) favours a dullard, him the learned revere. When the ocean accepts a river flowing into it, naturally it does not reject the small rivulets (that feed the river). 42. If Mount Malaya (where sandalwood grows in abundance) with love lets *bor* and *babhul* trees grow in its neighbourhood, who will ever call them thorny bushes ?

For there is no lack of sweet fragrance in them. 43. When the Lord of speech (the guru of the gods) accepts anyone, all the multitude of gods respect him. Or if a rod of iron touches a *paris* (a touchstone) then it can no longer be called rusty iron. 44. Thus seeing Tuka's pure mind, Thou art pleased with him; so I certainly have not the power to keep him at a distance. ' 45. Saying this he placed his head at (Vithoba's) feet and then the king of birds got up quickly and started to go as fast as the wind.

GARUD MEETS TUKARAM

46. Now Tuka was feeling very impatient at heart, and with his hand on his forehead was waiting day and night (for the pilgrims' return), like a child when missing its mother; 47. or as the *chatak* bird when it is thirsty opens its mouth (towards the cloud), and as the hungry young ones of a tortoise look toward their mother. 48. If a miser loses all his money, he is restless day and night; as a fish struggles when water dries up. 49. In the same way, Tuka was uneasy day and night on account of his separation from Pandhari, when suddenly the Eagle stood near him. 50. At the sight of the Eagle, Tuka prostrated himself on the ground before him, embraced him with loving reverence, 51. and then asked him lovingly, ' Is the Husband of Rukmini happy ? I am uneasy day and night. I cannot say when I shall have a sight of Him ? 52. Why has the Life of the world been so cruel and hardened His heart ? Why has He thrown me aside in a strange land ? For these reasons I feel dejected. 53. Many *Warkaris* (pilgrims) must have assembled. Why has He forgotten *Me* ? What unbearable crime have I committed ? I certainly do not know. ' 54. The vehicle of Vishnu (the Eagle) heard these words of Tuka, and replied, ' On account of your dejection of mind, the Life of the world has become very uneasy at heart; 55. as a mother is at

the separation from her infant child; or as the doe at the separation from her young one; or as a thirsty person is troubled at heart in the absence of water; 56. in the same way, the Husband of Rukmini thinks of you day and night and therefore has sent me to invite you and take you to Him.' 57. He read out the letter to Tuka sent by the Husband of Rukmini, at hearing which Tuka's eyes became wet with tears. 58. Tuka took the letter in his hand and again and again placed it on his head. Then holding the letter in his hand he pressed it to his heart and embraced it lovingly; 59. as a cloud showers water suddenly on a dry tree, in the same way Tuka felt happy at the sight of the Eagle; 60. as at the rising of the sun, the water lilies are happy, so at the arrival of the Eagle, Tuka felt happy; 61. as Bharata sat waiting for Shri Rama (his brother) at Nandigram, and felt satisfied when the Son of Anjani (Maruti) delivered the message of (Shri Rama) to him, 62. in the same manner when the Husband of Rukmini sent the letter and the king of birds (Garud) delivered the message, Tuka's heart became quiet.

TUKARAM REFUSES TO RIDE ON GARUD

63. Then Garud in sweet words said to Tuka, 'Now please sit on my back and in less than a moment I will show you Pandhari. 64. Your body is emaciated by disease, and has not strength to walk, so the Lord of Pandhari has kindly sent me immediately. 65. Now, therefore get up quickly, and don't delay.' Hearing these words, Tuka said in answer, 66. to the King of Birds, 'You are my Master's vehicle and so an object of reverence to me, His slave, you wise one. 67. Shoes are to be put on the feet and not to be placed on the head. A wise man must consider when he places ornaments for the feet (*wale* and *nepur*) on the head. 68. How can the step of stone at the main door of the temple be installed in the place of the image?

A royal menial, although he is the king's favourite, is not to be placed on the throne. 69. Therefore, O vehicle of Vishnu, hear me. I will never sit on you. I surely do not know how to describe the glory of your greatness. 70. You carry on your back the Ancient of Days and the Enjoyer of *Vaikunth* (*Vishnu*) whose belly contains limitless universes. This is a thing simply to be admired. 71. He is invincible to the gods and the demons, still you conquered Him, and moreover yielded to Him, and eventually became His vehicle, and you stand before Him with folded hands. 72. Therefore, to worshippers like me the Lord and His servant are the same. So I will never come by riding on your back. 73. Now therefore this is my earnest request to you. Think in your mind of my condition and go back to Pandhari at once and bring the Husband of Rukmini here.' 74. Then Tuka touched Garud's feet, prostrating himself before him and saying, 'The Life of the world is in your power, please bring Him here that I may meet Him.' 75. 'Surely,' said the son of Vinata (Garud the Eagle) and quickly started, determined in his mind to bring about a meeting between the Lord of Pandhari and Tuka. 76. With this resolve at heart, Garud arrived at Pandhari, and the Lord of the heart (Krishna) became anxious at not seeing Tuka on his back. 77. As when a man sent to fetch a daughter returns without bringing her, any mother feels sorry; just so was it with the Husband of Rukmini. 78. Then Garud approached and placed his head at His feet and said: 'O God of gods, Shri Hari, Tuka would not ride on me. 79. But, O Husband of Rukmini, on account of Thy separation Tuka feels sorry night and day. Now, O Lord of *Vaikunth*, kindly come and meet him.' 80. 'Of course,' said the Life of the World who embraced Garud, then called to Rukmini, and told her the secret of His heart. 81. On this the Mother of the universe replied, 'The *Vaishnava bhaktas* have

assembled here for the pilgrimage. It is not proper for you to leave this festival and go. 82. As a house looks empty without a wife, or as a river without water, so Pandhari will appear without you, O Lord of *Vaikunth*. 83. As an army and fortune without a king, or as the multitude of stars without the moon, or as ornaments without the saffron mark (on the forehead of a woman whose husband is living); all these look ugly. 84. Likewise if you are not here on this occasion, Pandhari will appear forlorn. We shall go to meet Tuka after the *Gopalkala* ceremony'

NIMBARAJA'S STORY

85. Hearing this appeal of Rukmini, the Life of the World said, 'By all means.' Just then saints came there to visit Him. Listen to their names:— 86. Shaikh Muhammad, Ganeshnath, Bodhla, and the well known Nimbraja, Santoba Powar, these *Vaishnava bhaktas* came there to visit Him. 87. Cymbals, vinas and drums were sounded, and the *Vaishnavas* sang in love. Banners were beautifully unfurled amongst which shone those with the emblems of the eagle. 88. All the people prostrated themselves on the ground when the Life of the world said to Rukmini: 'Nimbaraja has come rolling on the ground thus far; and so he must be very fatigued. 89. Therefore I must give him some suitable boon.' At this point the listeners may have a doubt, and with love raise a question. 90. They may ask 'Who is this Nimbaraja, and to what place does he belong? Describe him in detail.' As they thus question, the mind of the speaker is filled with delight. 91. The question is like the moon to the *chakor* bird, or like a sudden shower of nectar to a hungry person as a result of good fortune; 92. or as when a wish-cow comes and stand in the yard of a pauper, or as when a *paris* (touchstone) by chance falls into a box of iron; 93. or as when a cloud showers on a crop about to ripen, then the

kernels increase twofold (fortunate are they who obtain this); 94. in the same way the speaker feels happy at heart at the question of the listeners, and replies: 'Listen with love to the detailed life of Nimbaraja. 95. In our own country there is a town called Devadaithan, and Nimbaraja was by a very old inheritance the accountant there. 96. Although he had children and others in his family, yet Nimbaraja called himself a *Vaishnava bhakta*, and as he was in the habit of worshipping the saints with devotion, repentance arose in his mind. 97. Then he said, 'Enough of this worldly life; the *maya* of God is uncontrollable, and all life is wasted when carrying on worldly affairs.'

NIMBARAJA VISIT THE JYOTIRLINGAS

98. With repentance at heart, he started out to visit sacred places. On visiting the twelve *Jyotirlingas** his mind was comforted. 99. He visited all the beautiful sacred places on earth, hard to travel to; then after visiting the seven* salvation-giving sacred towns he went into the Himalayas. 100. To describe the glory of the travel, the story would be far too long drawn out, therefore I will abbreviate. Let the listeners understand it. 101. Thrice he took a *kavadi* (sling) full of the water of the Bhagirathi, and in it bathed the god Rameshwar with love. Thus accumulating good deeds, he returned quickly home. 102. Now he wished to utter the names of Hari with his lips, and with this longing at heart he kept on repeating God's names. 103. One who has performed religious rites and austerities without the desire of their fruit, he alone out of repentance gives himself up with love to the praise of Shri Hari. 104. Visits to sacred places, performance of sacrifices, and the study of the *Vedas*, fructify only when one sings of the good qualities of Shri Hari with an unreserved mind. 105. Now

* See Appendix on 'Words With Numerical Significance' under 12, 'The Twelve Jyotirlingas'; and under 7, 'Saptapuris.'

enough of this lengthy talk. The *Vaishnavas* know the lovely secret. They abandon all sense of honour and dishonour, and sing the praises of God day and night. 106. When one does not give himself up solely to singing the praise of Shri Hari all other means become useless as a deep well without water; 107. or as in a grain field there are a large number of ears without kernels; or as when a village officer is successful in acquiring a hereditary office, but is without an issue; 108. or as though one should study a good deal, but is not able to make a timely use of it; or as the sitting of a king on a throne is vain without power; 109. or as plates with various kinds of dainty food without any *ghee* (melted butter) on them; so all religious means become useless without the description of Shri Hari's doings. 110. Therefore Nimbaraja had a desire to sing the praise of God. So one day the Lord of Pandhari gave a command to Gajavadana (Ganpati). 111. Said He, 'Give Nimbaraja the boon that with inspiration he will sing My praise.' As the Husband of Rukmini gave this order, Ganpati replied ' Verily, verily.' 112. One night while Nimbaraja was asleep, the son of Parvati appeared to him in a dream in the guise of a Brahman. 113. He stroked him to rouse him and said, 'Accept this boon of mine.' Saying this He put on his palm a *vida* (rolled betelnut leaves). 114. Nimbaraja in a drowsy state threw it into his mouth. Then Gajavadana (Ganpati) said: 'This is an everlasting boon. 115. Now without study you will be able to delineate Hari's good actions. The genius of pleasure will everlastingly be present at your performance.' 116. The son of Parvati offered this boon and at once disappeared. When Nimbaraja awoke he brought to his mind the dream. 117. He did not see the Brahman near him, but there was the *vida* in his mouth. He swallowed it, and got up and sat down. 118. As he looked at his palm he found on it a red stain. He tried

to wash it with water, but could not get rid of it; 119. just as the ocean supplies the well with water and it does not get dry even in a drought or as a person with divine knowledge satisfies a *Yogi* and he is no more troubled with the hunger; 120. or as iron with the touch of the *paris* (touchstone) becomes gold, and no more can rust remain; or as when the Ganges accepts an insignificant rivulet, it becomes sacred to all; 121. or if Brahmadeva gives one a long life, he is unhindered by fear and disease; or if a prince supports a pauper, his fortune knows no decrease; 122. or when the sun gives one a physical lustre, how can it be impaired by cold? So the stain of the *vida* could not be washed off. 123. From that day Nimbaraja began to perform *kirtans*. The *Vaishnavas* who listened to him were engrossed. 124. Having given up all idea of shame, honour, and social etiquette, and having forsaken all ties of hope, and discarded all differences, he enjoyed the pleasure of the love of God.

RUKMINI OFFERS A FORTUNE TO NIMBARAJA

125. In this natural state of mind, Nimbaraja went to Pandhari. The listeners should remember that it was at this point that they questioned me. 126. The Life of the world said to Rukmini, 'Give some boon to Nimbraraja.' At this the Mother of the world was astonished. 127. The Mother of the universe took the form of a female gardener and sat on the way with a basket full of carrots cut into pieces. 128. As Nimbaraja was returning from the temple she said to him in a gentle tone, 'My child is crying at home; I must go and fetch it. 129. So do me a kindness and sit here for a while. I will bring my babe and return immediately. 130. If you do not grant my request, who will take care of my carrots? Many men are wandering in the bazar and they might take them away.' 131. As the Mother of the universe said this, his mind was filled

with pity and he said, 'I will sit here, but return quickly.' 132. The female gardener gave the basket in his custody and going to the temple, did not return for three long hours. 133. Then as Nimbaraja removed the cloth from the basket and looked into it he saw lumps of gold and not a simple carrot. 134. He was astonished and said, 'The Primal Mother (Lakshmi) wants to put me into temptation. This cannot be called gold but a great calamity. So it seems to me.' 135. Disgust arose in his mind, just as a Brahman on entering a Mahammadan's house will feel sick at the sight of the flesh there; 136. or as a beautiful person will not look at a leper; or as at the sight of liquor in front of him a repentant man will walk away from the place; 137. so when Nimbaraja saw the gold inside the basket his mind felt disgust. Then he returned to the temple and prostrated himself reverently before God. 138. He joined his hands palm to palm and pleaded, 'O God, why dost Thou put me into temptation? I wish Thy favour, and no fortune or wealth.' 139. Then he made a namaskar to Rukmini and returned to his lodging, and began lovingly to repeat the names of Hari without interruption. 140. Here in the temple Rukmini said, 'Oh Life of the world, I obeyed your order and gave gold to Nimbaraja, but his mind does not take to it.' 141. The Pervader of the world {smiled and said, 'My *bhaktas* are pleased with my worship. Temptation, greed and avarice have no effect on them. 142. The showers of rain do not penetrate a mountain; and the sky cannot be painted black; nor does cold affect the sun; and heat has no effect on the moon; 143. thirst does not trouble the ocean, and food does not trouble fire. O you wise one, how can wind be shut up in a gaol? 144. So my *bhaktas* are indifferent; snares of temptation do not affect them.'

NIMBARAJA AT THE CHANDRABHAGA

While the Lord of *Vaikunth* thus spoke, Rukmini great-

ly wondered in her mind. 145. The next morning the saints started for the Chandrabhaga to bathe, with Nimbaraja in their company. 146. Then the Lord of Pandhari thought to himself, 'I must give Nimbaraja some imperishable reward by which in full love he will be engrossed in my praise.' 147. Saying this, He who was as dark as the *tamal* leaf took the garb of a Brahman, put garlands of *tulsi* around His neck and arrived there. 148. He had a cap on his head and a belt around His loins, on His forehead was the odorous black powder (*buka*). Listen to what the one dark as a cloud said to Nimbaraja at that time: 149. 'I am going to bathe in the Bhimarathi; thieves are wandering here and there in the fair, therefore keep with you the belt, the cap, and the garland.' 150. Saying this, the Husband of Rukmini handed over to him His ornaments and in the twinkling of an eye disappeared. 151. As Nimbaraja looked about he could nowhere see the Brahman. For three hours he sat waiting for him. 152. Still he did not return. Then he communicated the news to the saints: 'A Brahman came here and listen to what he said. 153. Said he, "I am going to bathe, so keep my ornaments with you." Then he took off his garland, cap and belt, and handed them over to me. 154. Within the twinkling of an eye he disappeared then and there and I have been anxiously waiting for him. 155. He has not as yet returned; so please tell me what should be done now.' The saints wondered as they heard this. 156. All the *Vaishnava bhaktas* said, 'He is not a Brahman but the Husband of Rukmini. He gave you these as a reward and disappeared. 157. Therefore without any scruple in your mind, wear these ornaments.' As the saints thus spoke he prostrated himself before them. 158. Then the saints fastened the belt on his loins and around his neck put the beautiful garland of *tulsi* and the cap on his head.

On his forehead they applied the black powder. 159. The *bhaktas* gathered in the sandy bed and said to Nimbaraja. ' *Vanamali* (Krishna) has given you a reward, and has created a festival as delightful as *Divali* to the pious. 160. Therefore, you perform a *kirtan* on this bed of sand. Our ears are eager to hear you, please satisfy them. 161. Then the *vina* was set in tune with the drum. Collecting cymbals quickly, they unfurled the banners. 162. Brahmins well versed in the *Vedas*, *Shastras* and *Puranas*, many saints and *Mahants* and *Vaishnavas*, and men of all the eighteen castes came there to listen. 163. At sunset the *kirtan* began. Nimbaraja sang the obeisance with the clapping of hands and repeating the names of Vitthal. 164. As he thought of the Husband of Rukmini in his mind, tears of joy flowed from his eyes. The gods came there on their chariots of light to watch the wonderful event. 165. As people listened to his simple and loving singing their hearts were touched. Knowers and critics were absorbed in it. 166. When the speaker has only love in his mind, there the supreme Being finds comfort. Skill, cleverness and wisdom are unessential. 167. Singing without love is as the body without life, or as food cooked without salt. It does not give any taste at all. 168. Of what value is musk without fragrance ? It should be thrown into the fire. A beautiful woman without a child cannot truly be called a mistress of the house. 169. Of what use are the fair complexion and a beautiful face without a nose ? So also it cannot be a real *kirtan* in which the singing is without love. 170. ' O Krishna, Rama, *Meghashyama*, Govinda, Gopala, Purushottama, *Achyuta*, Narahari, and Atmarama, give me love in Thy worship.' 171. Nimbaraja uttered these names and danced. *Garudadhvaja* (the eagle-bannered one, Vishnu) was pleased, and what did He do then ? 172. Shripati became a child, took peacock feathers in His

hand, and did a very wonderful thing, which you listeners should listen to with reverence. 173. Shri Hari stood on the shoulders of Nimbaraja and waved with His own hand the wisp. Listen to this, O devout listeners. 174. He Who dwells in the ocean of milk, Who reclines on the serpent Shesha, Who is the very life of the Daughter of the ocean (Lakshmi), He, the Life of the world, waved the wisp lovingly on His *bhakta*. 175. Although *Yogis* with perseverance sit on the *vajrasana* (the bed of iron spikes) still He does not show Himself to *them*. He stands on the back of Nimbaraja and waves the wisp of peacock feathers. 176. He is not attainable to those spiritual aspirants who perform many sacrifices, religious rites and heaps of austerities. He, the Merciful to the lowly, *Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the heart), reveres His *bhaktas*. 177. He whom the god Shiva (*Virupaksha*), restraining His mind contemplates in solitude, He the Ornament of His *bhaktas*, the Husband of Rukmini, pays respect to His servants. 178. In a *kirtan* where the One who is like a cloud is present, there the sixty-four arts and fourteen sciences are favourable. This the wise can discern. 179. The audience looked on steadily; the *kirtan* lasted for four watches, but no one felt sleepy or wearisome. 180. The Ocean of milk knows no famine, and with nectar there can be no disease. Wise listeners, how can darkness visit the house of the sun? 181. In the same way in the *kirtan* of the loving, sleep and sloth do not come. All forget caste-differences and become one. 182. The audience in supreme Brahman joy clapped hands in tune with the sound of cymbals and *mridang*. They forgot all differences and dualities and rocked themselves as they repeated God's names.

KRISHNA ON NIMBARAJA'S SHOULDERS

183. When there still remained four *ghatikas* of the night a wonderful event took place. The wife of a rich

person covered with a cloth was going to bathe. 184. She suddenly saw before her the Lord of Pandhari Himself. Then running quickly she arrived at the *kirtan*. 185. As she came near Nimbaraja, and began to look for the Husband of Rukmini, He disappeared, at which she wondered. 186. She wept loudly and clasped the feet of Nimbaraja. The people asked her as to why she came running there. 187. 'What wonderful sight did you see? Tell us at once.' She bowed to all. Listen to what she said, 188. 'Just now I saw Shri Hari on the shoulders of Nimbaraja, waving the wisp of peacock feathers lovingly with His own hand. 189. So I came running, but I don't see Him here now. I certainly do not know where the Husband of Rukmini has gone. 190. I wanted to see once more the beautiful and tender Lord of the world, therefore I am sorry at heart that He does not grant me this sight. 191. The people wondered and exclaimed, 'This wonderful event cannot be explained.' The wise ones came near, desiring to see some evidence of the event. 192. *Chakrapani* (Krishna) had disappeared from the shoulders of Nimbaraja. But on the black powder which the good people had thrown the tiny feet (of Krishna) were impressed. 193. Noticing this evidence, saints and other good people wondered. Embracing one another they prostrated themselves on the ground. 194. They bowed to the lady who had seen the Lord of Pandhari and said, 'Because you were in possession of some good deeds (in your former births), you saw the Husband of Rukmini.' 195. As the men and women were singing in this way the sun arose. Then Nimbaraja waved lights over the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna). 196. On the full moon day, the *Gopalkala* ceremony was performed and then the crowds of pilgrims began to disperse. Therefore the Brother of the lowly was sad. He was overcome on account of His own love. 197. When a helpless daughter goes to her husband's home, her mother

weeps through grief. The same was the state of the Lord of Pandhari as the fair broke up. 198. Shri Hari said to Rukmini, ' This Pandhari now looks sad. My *bhaktas* have gone to their homes. So I find no rest. 199. Now we must hurry up and go to see Tuka. ' Saying this the Lord of the world became very impatient. 200. Garud was sent for, and the god assumed a *sagun* form which the Husband of Aparna (Shiva) for ever contemplates with a pure heart. 201. Hari rode on the back of the Son of Vinata (Garud) with Rukmini, and arrived at the town of Dehu with the velocity of a wish.

TUKARAM MEETS VITHOBA AT DEHU

202. The grocer *Vaishnava* Tuka sat impatiently waiting. Said he, ' When will *Chakrapani* (Krishna) come with Mother Rukmini ? 203. Today my right eye throbs and every now and then my right hand also throbs. These good omens comforted him all the time. 204. Just then, suddenly, he beheld the shining banner with an emblem of the eagle on it, and he went in front of it and in love prostrated himself. 205. Seeing the loving devotion of His *bhakta*, the god of gods manifested Himself. Even Brahmadeva and others are unable to understand Him. 206. The form of the god was beautiful and tender. He had worn the yellow garment. On His ears were the crocodile earrings and on His breast shone the *kaustubha* jewel. 207. On His head was a resplendent crown studded with divine gems. The Life of the world had put around His neck the *padak* and *ekavali* ornaments. 208. On His feet were the *nepur* and *wale* which made a tinkling sound. Hearing that sound the *Vedas* felt shy. The Lord of the world manifested Himself with Rukmini. 209. At the sight of this form, Tuka was delighted at heart. Then he embraced (the god) with love and held His feet.

210. In the next chapter there will be a conversation between the god and his *bhaktas* in a language full of pathos. Let the saints and others lovingly listen to it. 211. It is a delicious draught from the Ganges of love, like the nectar churned out of the ocean of joy. Mahipati requests the listeners to taste it quietly with love.

212. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Bhaktavijaya*, hearing which the Lord of the world will be pleased. O ye loving and pious *bhaktas*, listen to it. This is the fifty-first very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER LII

TUKARAM

(Continued)

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lord of the world.

INVOCATION

1. Victory, victory to Thee, the Ocean of mercy to Thy *bhaktas*, the Imperishable, the Indestructible, the Saviour of the world, the Primal-Pillar, Generous in giving final deliverance, the Husband of Rukmini, O Shri Vitthal. 2. At whom Thou dost look with a compassionate eye, the snares of the worldly life are destroyed for him; Thou dost wean him from his worldly affairs, and eventually dost give him final deliverance. 3. Even the thousand-hooded Shesha is at a loss for words in the endeavour to describe Thy generosity. The talent of a great poet is wearied. There I am a mere gnat. 4. But the way of love is like this. Children speak to their mother in words without meaning, but she is not sorry at hearing them. On the other hand on account of her own affection she is pleased. 5. So also out of compassion, the Life of the world should accept my uncouth language. This is the only gift I ask of Thee, through Thy own inspiration, O merciful One.

GOD'S POWER SUPREME

6. Clouds obtain water from the ocean; rivers take the rain-water and pour into the ocean; then what obligation can there be when the thing is returned to Him to whom it belongs? 7. If the sun is to be seen, it is to be seen by its own light. In the same way, O Lord of the Heart, the power to praise Thee is not ours. 8. We bow down to the earth and the weight of our body falls also on the earth; likewise, to praise Thee, we have no independent power. 9. If we praise the wind it is through its power that we

breathe; in the same way Thou dost cause Thy own deeds to be uttered by my tongue. 10. If we wave incense over fire, it is through the power of the fire that the smoke comes up; in the same way it is through Thy power that the mind becomes quiet and Thy deeds are spoken. 11. If *abhishheka* (sprinkling water on a deity by reciting Vedic hymns) is made on the Ganges, the water taken for that purpose is taken from the Ganges itself; likewise it is through Thy inspiration that the poets speak in various ways. 12. When the moon rises it is visible by its own light. If a mother is served, the server's own body has come from her. 13. We sit under a wish-tree and water it by our imagination. A wise person feels shy to talk of his obligation. 14. Through Thy power, O Husband of Rukmini, the *Vedas* have praised Thee without limit; but after profound thought the *Vedas* said; ' *Neti, Neti* ' (' It is not that; it is not that ').

TUKARAM'S PLEADING FOR INSPIRATION

15. Thou, O *Adhokshaja* (God), dost know the innermost secret of Thy *bhaktas*. Now grant me a boon and say ' Fear not ' and cause me to relate the stories of Thy *bhaktas*. 16. At the close of the previous chapter the Husband of Rukmini went to Dehu and in a *sagun* form met Tuka lovingly. 17. The Life of the world was pleased and said, ' Ask for some boon and I will give thee such a boon as even Brahmadeva cannot obtain despite His effort. ' 18. Tuka replied, ' That I should never forget Thee, that I should always sing of Thy deeds with a loving heart; 19. that I should for ever have the company of Thy loving *bhaktas*: this is the gift I ask for. Do not disappoint me, O merciful One. 20. That I should have love for Thy worship. I do not want a fortune. Thou mayest offer the four kinds of salvation; but I do not care for these. 21. An uninterrupted company of saints ;

and Thy name ever on the tip of my tongue. If I have these, even rebirth will always be acceptable. 22. This is the only boon I ask for, O Husband of Rukmini.' Saying this he bowed down to God. The Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) wondered as He heard this.

23. The Friend of His *bhaktas* said to Garud, 'The loving Tuka is indifferent to worldly things, unattached to them and full of love. He has abandoned everything and he worships only. 24. On account of the pain of My separation from him, he has given up even food and water. Therefore his body is emaciated.' 25. On this the Son of Vinata (Garud) said, 'In Thy letter Thou hast given him the blessing that as long as *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) and *Kailas* (Shiva's heaven) exist, Tuka shall live. 26. O Lord of *Vaikunth*, Thy promise will never prove untrue. Then why art Thou so sad at seeing him so emaciated? It is only out of Thy love for him. 27. As his mind is absorbed in Thy worship, he has overcome *Kali* (the Dark Age) and *Kāl* (god of death). He is truly the *avatar* of Nama. The saints know this secret. 28. He has worshipped Thee through several of his former births, and steadying and concentrating his mind has made Thee his own and sings lovingly of Thy deeds.'

29. On this the Lord of the world said to Tuka, 'I am very hungry. Without eating anything I hurriedly started to meet you. 30. Whatever food is ready in your house bring it on a plate. Don't you hesitate to bring it as it is, either dry or with sauce.' 31. The readers are likely to raise the question as to why *Chakrapani* (Vishnu) came hungry even when Rukmini was near. 32. Tuka intended to feed the god, and knowing it the Lord of Pandhara said so. For the Lord of the lowly does a thing by which the desire of His *bhakta* is fulfilled. 33. Then Tuka fetched water and washed the lotus-feet of the god; and at once

put around its neck a garland of tender tulsi leaves. 34. Then with great love he bowed to Him, and brought food on a plate, and dry bread with some vegetable and salt. 35. The Life of the world ate it with great relish. Good people may have a doubt as to how Narayan (God), the Dweller on the ocean of milk, ate dry and coarse bread. 36. But Shri Hari feels hungry when He finds sincere devotion. He cares for love only, and does not think of caste or race.

GOD CARES FOR LOVE, NOT FOR FOOD

37. The evil-minded Duryodhana had many dainty dishes and was waiting for Shripati to come and dine at his house, but He did not dine there but ate kernels at Vidur's. 38. When Draupadi with sincere devotion was anxiously waiting for Him (in her trouble), He put aside His own plate while dining (at His own palace) and rushed to help her, sat beside her, and asked for at least a twig of the vegetable to eat. 39. The *Yadnya Purusha* (Vishnu, the Lord of sacrifice), who is entirely pure, insisted on eating the food left over by the cowherd boys on their plates. The One dark as cloud also ate with love the fruit tasted by a Bhil woman. 40. So if He ate coarse food at Tuka's house, what wonder can there be? The listener should have no scruples as he hears these stories of old. 41. Well, the Life of the world sat there with Rukmini and dined. Tuka poured water on their hands to wash them and ate the food left over on their plates. 42. Tuka then gave them leaves of Tulsi to clean their mouths, and the Merciful to the lowly, seeing Tuka's love, ate them with great respect. 43. Thus pleased, the Lord of the world therefore said to Tuka, ' Now keep Me in your heart, and do not be sorry at separation from Me. 44. Whenever you call Me, I will meet you in My *sagun* form.' Saying this, *Aahokshaja*

(Vishnu) went away. 45. Tuka ran after Him and placed his head on His lotus-feet. Then *Vanamali* (Vishnu) returned to Pandharpur with Rukmini.

A FASTING BRAHMAN REJECTS TUKARAM'S FAVOUR

46. A Brahman with a desire for skill in reading the *Puranas* sat performing austerities at Alandi. This desire was ever present in his mind. 47. Then Dnyaneshwar said to him in a vision, 'Go at once to Tuka. He will give you a favour with his own hand and thereby your desire will be fulfilled.' 48. The Brahman thought it over and quickly went to Dehu. There he met Tuka and explained to him his heart's desire. 49. Said he, 'I was performing austerities at Alakavati (Alandi); but Dnyandev has sent me to you.' Hearing these words, Tuka was astonished. 50. Thought he, 'I do not possess a store of good deeds that I may spend on his account. Dnyandev has merely created a nuisance for me.' 51. He said to himself, 'This man has no learning in his luck. Therefore Dnyandev through disgust has sent this dogged fellow to me. 52. I am ignorant. I don't know *japa* (muttering God's names), *tapa* (penance) and austerities. Why has Dnyandev given me this honour?' 53. Then he gave the Brahman eleven *abhangs* and a cocoanut and told him, 'When you eat this you will at once gain knowledge.' 54. The Brahman's mind was suspicious and he thought, 'Eating a cocoanut will not bring knowledge, and of what good to me are these *abhangs* written in Marathi?' 55. With this suspicion in mind the unlucky fellow threw these away and went off; as if one should come across a wish-jewel, but sling it away as a mere pebble. 56. If an unlucky fellow finds a store of wealth, it appears to him as charcoal. A patient finds dainty foods bitter. 57. A drunkard considers any bottle containing the water of the Bhagirathi (the Ganges) as a

bottle containing wine. A poverty-stricken person will discard a grove of wish-trees. 58. In the same way, the Brahman threw away Tuka's favour then and there. Tuka then wrote and sent this letter to Dnyanraja of Alakavati (Alandi): 59. ' You have honoured an insignificant person such as I am, and have sent a fasting Brahman to me. I took your command on my head and at once gave him a favour. 60. But he doubted it and threw away the eleven *abhangs* and the cocoanut and walked off.' 61. This message which he had already planned in his mind he sent to Alandi. Then bringing *Harshikashi* (the Lord of the heart) into his mind, he began to repeat His names.

THE SAME FAVOUR TRANSFORMS A DULLARD

62. King Shivaji had in his service a person well versed in the *Shastras* and *Puranas*. This person had as his servant a Brahman who was a great dullard and ignorant. 63. He once came to Tukoba and bowed down to him. The noble *Vaishnava* took up the same cocoanut and gave it to him. 64. He also gave him the eleven *abhangs* which he had already written out. The Brahman cracked the cocoanut and ate the kernel then and there with love. 65. As he returned home he found that a *Purana* was being read. Among the audience were learned men well versed in the *Vedas* and *Shastras*. 66. There were other knowing and clever persons who listened to the reading. Just then the Brahman entered and addressed the reader: 67. ' You have not explained the words of the verse which you read just now. ' As the learned men repeated the question all others thought that he was quite right. 68. They exclaimed, ' This is really a great wonder for he does not even know his *a. b. c.* We are at a loss to understand how he should so suddenly understand the meaning of the *Puranas*. ' 69. On being asked to explain, he told the whole story in detail. Said he, ' Tuka gave me eleven

abhanga and a cocoanut. 70. As soon as I cracked it and ate the kernel of it, I could understand Sanskrit.' As the audience heard him they were wonder-struck. 71. Then the reader kindly asked him to come near him, and handing him a leaf of the book, said, 'Read this to us, then only shall we have clear evidence of what you say.' 72. Then in his mind bowing down to Tuka's feet, he began to explain the meaning of the *Purana*, at which the learned men in the audience were wonder-struck. 73. Said they, 'The doings of Vishnu's *bhaktas* are wonderful. They can make possible the impossible. With undivided love they have made *Chakrapani* (Vishnu) their own. 74. Like an actor in a play, Bhagwant (God) creates a mountain out of a mustard seed. The life of His *bhaktas* whom He loves passes all wonder.'

BRAHMANS OF CHINCHWAD SEND FOR TUKARAM

75. The wonderful news that a dullard had gained knowledge reached Dev at Chinchwad. The Brahmans then assembled together and naturally spoke to one another. 76. 'We censure Tuka out of pride. He should not be called a man, to be sure.' 77. Someone said, 'Let us call him here some day and ask him to explain who he really is. 78. He is a loving worshipper of the Brahmans. He will at once explain to us.' Thus the Brahmans of Chinchwad thought. 79. Then they hired a man and told him to go to Dehu and bring Tuka to Chinchwad at once. 80. They said, 'Tell him that Dev has called him to Chinchwad.' Hearing this the man went immediately. 81. Then he went to Dehu and prostrated himself before Tuka. There a praise-service of Hari was going on and many good people had gone there to listen. 82. With loving devotion and great regard men and women were listening. The sky was filled with the loud sound of God's names. The audience became bodily

unconscious. 83. No one thought of his worldly affairs. Even the eyelids did not close. The mind was absorbed in the name and form of God. All felt deep satisfaction. 84. The players of cymbals and drums forgot themselves. Every kind of distinction was lost. Love for God alone was in every mind. 85. Even the torch-bearer had lost bodily consciousness. His mind was engrossed in the name and form of God. He forgot to think of himself. 86. As he raised his torch it touched the canopy.

SHEKH MUHAMMAD EXTINGUISHES A DISTANT FIRE

Here another story begins. May the wise listen to it with due respect. 87. In Chambhargonde there lived the well known Shekh Muhammad. He was performing a *kirtan* with great delight for his love of God's name. He was an ocean of knowledge. 88. Men of all the eighteen castes, great and small, sat there to listen. There were also learned and rich persons, very wise and knowing Brahmins. 89. With concentrated mind all listened. The performance was exceptionally delightful and unbelievers could not find a word of contradiction. They became perfectly silent. 90. Just then the performer jumped and rubbed the canopy with his hands. All wondered at this strange sight. 91. Then those who sat in front asked, 'Why did you rub the canopy, O *Swami*? 92. Seeing this strange action, our mind is confused?' Then Shekh Muhammad explained: 93. 'At Dehu the *Vaishnava* Tuka is performing a *kirtan* in love. No one noticed that the burning torch had touched the canopy. 94. I saw it on fire, and I extinguished it from here.' On hearing this the listeners felt dubious. 95. No one could believe it and they said, 'The town of Dehu is very far from here. How did you get the news of the distant fire? 96. There also must be there a crowd of listeners. Could *they* not notice it? How do you say that you put out the fire in the canopy?

97. Then Shekh Muhammad replied, 'There were men listening to the *kirtan* of Tuka, but while they listened to the life deeds of Hari they forgot themselves. 98. Their minds were absorbed in the name and form of God and all were in a subconscious state. The torch touched the canopy and set it on fire, and I at once put it out.' 99. On this the listeners asked, 'In the *kirtan* there was the Lord of Pandhari. Why did He not avoid this accident when he saw the canopy burning?' 100. Shekh Muhammad replied, '*Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the heart) forgot Himself through love. He did not think of His divine state and *bhaktas* forgot their state. 101. Both had become one. So who was to protect, and whom? When two lamps are burning they do not appear to be different. 102. When they live in one place they mingle one with the other. This state of their unconsciousness I could mentally understand. 103. If there are two islands in a river the stream is divided in two. Afterward when they join, no difference is visible. 104. The idol of a god and the utensils of worship are made of the same brass. If they are melted in a crucible, no difference is seen. 105. If clarified butter and any other butter are boiled in one pan, no difference is noticed. 106. So when God and His *bhaktas* become one, who is to know another's pain? On account of this identity of essence, there is joy eternal, and differences sink. 107. The Husband of Rukmini forgot His divine state and Tuka no longer thought himself to be a *bhakta*. The same was the condition of the listeners. I understood this state. 108. If you do not believe what I say, then send someone to Dehu to bring the news.' The listeners considered this reply as satisfactory. 109. Then they wrote a letter to the *Patil* (village officer) of Dehu and sent it by a camel-rider. In the letter they said, 'Please explain at full length the marvel we saw last night.' 110. At sunset the

reply came, 'At night as the *kirtan* was going on with full din, the torch touched the canopy and set it on fire. 111. It made a very large hole in it, but no one knew of it that night. In the morning it was noticed. This made all wonder.' 112. As they read this letter, they considered Shekh Muhammad's explanation as true. Then going to him they prostrated themselves before him. 113. Said they, 'How you could understand the wonderful miracle at Dehu astonished us all very much. It is really a matter for wonder.' 114. At this he said, 'How can I explain this to you? Fish swim straight up the stream which is impossible for others. 115. There are many water animals but none can course through water as fish can. In like manner the secret of a *bhakta* is not understood by anyone else but a man of real devotion. 116. Ants alone can pass along the path that they know. So the secret of a *Vaishnava* is known only by one endowed with sincere devotion. 117. How can the path of a bird's flight be determined in the sky? Birds alone fly that way. Others do not at all understand. 118. The frogs which are accustomed to live in a well, do they know what an ocean is? So the secret of a *guru* and his *bhaktas*, the worldly-wise can never comprehend.' 119. Saying these words, Shekh Muhammad was silent.

MANY MESSENGERS GO FROM CHINCHWAD: NONE RETURN

120. Now to resume our story partly related some time ago. Let the listeners pay attention to it. The man who had come from Chinchwad sat listening to Tuka's *kirtan*. 121. His devotion became fixed there and he forgot to deliver the message. Therefore he did not think of any worldly affairs, for his heart felt so happy. 122. He did not think of returning home. As he lovingly beheld Tuka he became absorbed in his *kirtan*. 123. At Chinchwad, Dev was waiting for his return. Said he, 'It is

many days, but neither Tuka nor the messenger has come back. I cannot say what has happened to him.' 124. Then the men (the Chinchwad Brahmans) sent another messenger. He also happened to listen to Tuka's *kirtan* and fell into the same subconscious state. 125. When after a further long delay he too did not return, a third man was sent. But he also lost regard for his body and his heart was full of love. 126. Then all the worshippers of *Gajavadana* (Ganpati) wondered and exclaimed, ' Three men went to Dehu, but none returned.' 127. As streamlets on joining the Ganges forget their former state; or as fragrance from various flowers identifies itself in essence with the wind; 128. when a wave is united with water, or a cloud disappears in the sky, or as borax in a crucible, these never appear again in their original forms; 129. such was the state of the messengers; they did not come back at all. to report the result of their mission. As they listened to the loving *kirtan* of Tuka they were lost in it. 130. Had they but delivered the message to Tuka, he would not have hesitated to come; for no better worshipper of Brahmans, or better *Vaishnava* or knowing one, could be found than he.

CHINCHWAD BRAHMANS AND TUKARAM MEET

131. They (the Chinchwad Brahmans) thought among themselves, ' Now we must abandon all pride of caste, and visiting him tell him the secret of our heart, and have our doubts cleared.' 132. Thus thinking the Brahmans started for Dehu. Tuka, without any one telling him of this, knew it mentally. 133. Said he, ' The Brahmans sent messengers, but none of them gave me the message. Now they themselves are kindly coming to meet me. 134. If I do not go from here to meet them, it is insulting them. For the Husband of Lakshmi (Vishnu) wears as an ornament the impression of a Brahman's kick [Bhrigu's kiek] on His breast. 135. Before they reach this place, I must

start.' Saying this in his mind he quickly started. 136. Just as when a *chatak* bird is thirsty, the clouds immediately come to it; or just as the ocean rises up at the sight of the full moon; 137. or when seeing a beautiful bit of diamond dust, a diamond comes up from the anvil [see also chapter 13 verse 204]; both give evidence of their attachment for one another; 138. because of the attraction of the magnet the particles of iron go to it; similarly Tuka knew at heart the great love of the Brahman for him. 139. Therefore the *bhakta* of Vishnu at once started. On his way he loudly sang with great love the deeds of Shri Hari. 140. After travelling half the way he suddenly noticed the noble Brahman coming towards him and Tuka prostrated himself before them.

141. On this the earth-gods (Brahman) said, ' You are without doubt Vishnu's *bhakta*, therefore with a desire to see you we were coming. 142. But our desire is fulfilled just here.' So saying, they gave him a loving embrace and took their seats. Listen to what they said to Tuka: 143. ' You have assumed an *avatar* in the *Kali Yuga* and displayed an unprecedented character. We have witnessed this with our own eyes, at which we simply wonder. 144. Taking advantage of an opportunity, we have come to ask you privately as to who you are. Please explain to us.' 145. Hearing this speech of the Brahman, he thought to himself, ' Unless I give them evidence, their doubt will not disappear.' 146. Then catching hold of the skin of his thigh, he ripped it open then and there. Inside there was pure, carded cotton. 147. At this sight the Brahman wondered inwardly and said, ' We are at a loss to understand how Tuka lives as a man. 148. How can life be supported without flesh and blood ?' One said, ' It is a work of *maya* (illusion). God's doing cannot be fathomed. 149. The jugglery of the five elements

through the love of worldly life has made men crazy for earthly enjoyments, and this craziness in men increases the love of the earthly life. 150. Tuka, who is Vishnu's *bhakta*, is beyond this. We knew this from experience. He cannot be called an ordinary man. He is really the *guru* of the world as an *avatar*. 151. The water of the Ganges should not be called ordinary. *Paris* (the touchstone) is not an ordinary pebble. Gold should not be compared with other metals. 152. The wish-tree is not a simple tree; the ocean is not a tank and Mount Meru is not to be compared with other mountains. 153. Garud, Vishnu's *bhakta*, was born from a species of bird. So this *Vaishnava* was born in a *Sudra* caste. But this is a poor simile. 154. Garud became Vishnu's vehicle, and thereby his body became pure. Tuka performs *Hari-kirtan*, and fully saves the dull and ignorant. 155. In future by listening to his poems, *Vairagya* (the ascetic spirit) will arise in the minds of evil men. He has shown a clear path to the ascetic *bhaktas*. 156. Saying this the noble Brahmans bowed down to Tuka. He raised up their hands and fell at their feet. 157. He said to the Brahmans, ' This is not proper for you. Our Lord (Vishnu) still wears on his chest the impression of Bhrgu's kick. 158. You are fit to be worshipped even by the God of gods, the life of the world. Out of mercy you glorify me. In fact I am low-born and humble.' 159. On this the noble Brahmans replied, ' To call one who is lovingly devoted to Vishnu's worship as of a low caste is not right. For in praising Him, even the *Vedas* became wearied. 160. Monkeys worshipped Shri Ram; and therefore Valmiki has described them in his *Ramayana*. Shri Vyasa has written down in the *Bhagwat Purana* the glorious deeds of the cowherd lads. 161. Therefore we have a right to praise you. For the wonderful fame of Vishnu-*bhaktas* has more than filled the three worlds. 162. For a long time we have had a desire

to see you and to-day it is fulfilled. You ripped open your thigh and gave us evidence.' 163. Then the Brahmans embraced Tuka and said, ' Please come to Chinchwad and perform a *kirtan* there some night. ' 164. In order to show respect to their desire, Tuka went into the town (of Chinchwad) for a night.

Meanwhile the people of Lohagaon thought among themselves, 165. ' We should bring Tuka into our town and listen to his *kirtans* to our heart's content. If we drink the waves of love-nectar, our worldly life will be fruitful. ' 166. Then they humbly approached Tuka, took him to Lohagaon, and with love always listened to his *Hari-kirtan*. 167. The pious and good people fed the Brahmans with many daintily cooked foods. 168. They erected a beautiful canopy. They worshipped the *Vaishnava* Tuka with garlands of flowers and fragrant sandal paste.

THE DESPONDENT HARIDAS AT LOHAGAON HELPED

169. For a month in Lohagaon every day there was a festival during which a *Haridas* from Pandharpur was going to collect money, there (at Lohagaon). 170. At that time a merchant was going into the bazaar on his horse. The *Haridas* accosted him. 171. You are travelling on a horse and we wonder how you can sleep here ! 172. In reply the merchant said, ' Tuka has performed *kirtans* for a whole month and we were awake during the four watches of the night. ' 173. When the *Haridas* heard this he felt anxious and said, ' I must not go into Lohagaon at all. 174. Where a *kirtan* of the God-loving (Tuka) is being performed, there the people will not like *my* skill; for a patient will never accept a drug when he can obtain divine nectar. 175. Before the lustre of a diamond the beads of glass do not shine; and at the rise of the sun the light of lamps fades. 176. Where there is the Ganges

flowing close by, who will care for wells ? So also, when one listens to an inspired *kirtan*, he will not like any artificial singing. 177. Let me avoid Lohagaon now and go to some other town. So thinking to himself, the *Haridas* turned back.

178. The people of the town at once went and reported to Tuka the matter which they had witnessed. 179. On hearing this, without a moment's delay he got up and said, 'Let us go to receive the *Haridas* and request him to come into the town.' 180. Tuka walked on hurriedly for joy at heart. The citizens also accompanied him to receive him (the *Haridas*). 181. Said they, 'The *Haridas* of Pandharpur being sad at heart is going away. Let us therefore invite him, and bring him into the town.' 182. Then they sent runners ahead and got him to turn back. He was told that the *Vaishnava* Tuka was coming to meet him in love. 183. As he heard this message he at once returned. Then Tuka bowed to the *Haridas* and embraced him. 184. The inhabitant of the sacred town (the *Haridas* from Pandharpur) said, 'I am going to get money. In the coming month of *Vaishakh* (May) I have to marry my son.' 185. 'Very well,' they said, and took the *Haridas* back into the town where he was given good lodging and also provisions of food. 186. After dinner at night he performed a *Hari-kirtan*. This went on for a month, and all felt joyful.

187. Then the *Vaishnava* Tuka ordered the pious citizens to raise a subscription for the *Haridas* and to see him off. 188. 'You may think it a matter of glory first to accept the labours of a Brahman and then to pay him for his labour, but thereby you do not acquire any store of good deeds. 189. There are citizens in this town, both rich and poor; raise money from them according to their ability.' 190. Hearing this command of Tuka, they

agreed. Then taking an inkpot, pen and paper, they wrote down names. 191. There were three sorts of people in the town, the best, the medium, and the ordinary type, and they requested Tuka to write figures against their names. 192. Tuka at once put one rupee against the best, eight annas against the middle men, and four annas against the ordinary. 193. The citizens did not agree to this, so Tuka told them to do as they pleased. 194. They themselves then wrote five rupees against the best and three rupees against the middle ones. 195. Only four annas had been charged the ordinary men but this amount was changed to one rupee. They showed the list to Tuka and got up at once. 196. Going into the town they raised the money. Then the chief citizens 197. piled the money before Tuka in a heap and said, ' Did not we adopt a good plan? Now pay the *Haridas* yourself. '

PRIDE OF DONORS EXPOSED BY TUKA

198. As they said this, Tuka knew in his mind that the demon of egoism had taken possession of their hearts. 199. It was as if a fly should fall into dainty food, or a bit of salt into milk, or as if a crooked-minded person should come and sit amongst the devoted; 200. or as if one should have tuberculosis in youth, or as if a Mang should enter an assembly of Brahmans, or as if one indifferent to worldly things should come in contact with a woman on account of some bad deeds done in his former birth; 201. or as if a swarm of locusts should fall suddenly upon a field at the point of ripening; or as if disease should attack the later crops in the month of *Margeshvar* (December); 202. or as when showers of rain are noticed in the sky but a sudden South wind should sweep them away; or as when the full moon rises it should be eclipsed by Rahu (darkness); 203. so, as the people

gave money in charity, pride their enemy occupied their hearts. Tuka thought of a remedy to destroy it. 204. The *Vaishnava bhakta* said to them, 'You have raised the money but be careful that you do not have any town-citizen out of the list.' 205. The people then said, 'There is a very poor weaver who is a reviler, a villain and very wicked. He has no love at heart whatsoever. 206. He alone is left out of the list. Others have given as their ability permitted them.' On this the loving *bhakta* said, 207. 'You go to his house and tell him from me, that you are to get from him the smallest coin which he can spare in charity.' 208. They wondered as they heard Tuka say this. Then they went to the house of the weaver and stood in his yard. 209. But he did not speak with them. He was engaged in warping. He did not ask them as to who they were or why they had come. 210. The citizens in wonder looked at one another and made signs to indicate that they had come to a fool just out of regard to Tuka. 211. Said they, 'A *Haridas* from Pandharpur has come here and has performed *kirtans* for a month. 212. Tuka has sent us to you to ask for some money.' At these words the fool was cross. 213. Said he, 'Since Tuka has begun his nonsensical talk, you have been mad. Without regard to public opinion you dance in his *kirtans* openly. 214. You have bid adieu to your worldly affairs. But why do you come to bother me? I have not in my house even a plate or bowl, then what should I give you?' 215. At these words of the fool his wife said to him, 'Out of regard for Tuka's words these great man have come and stood in our yard. 216. You are a great reviler and a villain. You never speak sweet words. At your house the visitors do not get even a clean seat. 217. Now have some consideration, and give them something.' Hearing his wife, the fool flew into a rage. 218. Angrily he said, 'There is a pot in our house. Give it them at once and

send them away.' 219. Hearing her husband, the wife felt comforted. Then she brought a water-pot and cleaning it handed it to him. 220. He gave it with his left hand (Indian symbol of an evil heart) but in their hearts the men considered it a gain. They at once took the pot and left the place. 221. All began to wonder and said, ' This villain is pleased. It is as if a forest fire should cool, or the *śar* tree should bear fruit. 222. To-day a dry wood has sprouted, a stone is wet with perspiration. *Rahu* (darkness) has become white and thrown its light on the world. 223. It was just like this when the villain showed so much generosity.' One of them said, ' It was because our luck was favourable.' 224. In this way conversing between themselves they returned quickly to Tuka. They placed the water-pot before him and bowed to him. 225. Looking at it the noble *Vaishnava* said to the people, ' The weaver is very generous. He has subscribed largely.' 226. Then he took the pot in his hand, and said, ' This is a gold pot. You did not know it. Unless you test it you will not know.' 227. The men said, ' This pot is only of pure brass. It was rubbed clean and therefore it looks like gold.' 228. But as they heated it in fire they found it to be pure gold. At this wonderful sight all were amazed. 229. They said, ' The doings of (this) saint are indescribable. He has rid the brass vessel of its impurity. His love for worship cannot be described. It is incomparable.'

230. Then the *Haridas* was sent for. His feet were washed, garlands of flowers were put around his neck, and clothes were given to him and his party. 231. Then the citizens placed before him the money collected by them, and requesting that it be accepted, all of them bowed to him with respect. 232. Then the *Vaishnava* Tuka said, ' The citizens are very generous. They have collected

this money and have given it to you. 233. There is a poor weaver, an inhabitant of this town, who is supposed to be a first class knave. But he with his heart and soul has given you this gold pot. 234. Please accept this gift which, in fact, is as small as a tulsi leaf. With this you can marry your son.' Saying this he (Tuka) bowed reverently to his feet. 235. The men who were proud to think that they alone were generous, were enraptured as they beheld this wonder. 236. The *Haridas* was greatly satisfied and left for Pandharpur at once; and the God-loving Tuka, indifferent to all worldly things, returned to Dehu. 237. Without regard to worldly honour, he contemplated *Adhokhshaja* (Vishnu) in his mind. In his sight the indigent, the helpless and the king were alike.

TUKARAM'S MYSTIC-MANTRA AND GURU-LINEAGE

238. One day this loving *bhakta* was taking a nap when he had a vision. O pious listeners, hear what the dream was. 239. As Tuka (in his dream was going to the Indrayani to bathe, the Lord of Pandhari assumed the dress of a Brahman and suddenly met him. 240. Tuka as he saw him prostrated himself before him. Then the Lord of the heart placed His hand on his head mercifully (i. e., gave him the mystic *mantra*). 241. As he received the message he bowed to the Brahman and requested him, 'Come to my house to dine with love.' 242. The Brahman said to Tuka, 'I want a quarter seer of ghee. If you promise to give me that, I will come to your house at once.' 243. 'Granted,' said Tuka and holding him by his hand he brought him home and said to his wife, 244. 'The Brahman has not eaten anything. He is hungry. So give him provisions of food and a quarter seer of ghee every day with a loving heart.' 245. As she heard these words she flew into a rage and said, 'Where have you brought the Brahman from, and how am I to give

him ghee ? ' 246. At this angry reply of his wife, the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna), who is as an actor in a play and the Lord of all, vanished out of sight. 247. After having experienced this dream, Tuka awoke. Love for God could not be contained in his heart. This wonderful sight was without comparison. 248. Said he, ' The Lord *Sadguru* has done me a favour. But I have had no occasion to serve him. He found me as I was going to bathe in the *Indrayani*. 249. He placed his hand on my head and asked for a quarter-seer of ghee. But seeing a quarrel in my house he at once went away. 250. My *Sadguru* described to me his ancestral line: Keshava Chaitanya, Raghava Chaitanya; and gave his own name as Babaji Chaitanya. 251. He gave me the favourite mystic *mantra*: *Rama-Krishna-Hari*, which the Enemy of the demon Tripur (Shiva) constantly repeats in love. 252. The day was Thursday, the bright tenth of *Mṛgha* (February) when I was so favoured, and then the *Sadguru* went away. ' 253. In such a faith he lovingly worshipped *Hari*, and at night with delight and devotion performed *kirtans*. 254. The fortunate people were enraptured as they heard the various illustrations and the pleasing and inspired poems. 255. They said, ' He is not a common man. He is God's *avatar*. Through him the Husband of Rukmini saves the world. '

TUKARAM'S ABHANGS THROWN INTO THE RIVER

256. As Tuka's reputation was thus increasing, the evil-minded were burning inwardly with rage. They said, ' Leaving aside the path of the *Shastras* he is preaching heterodox principles. 257. He has destroyed the *Karma Mṛg* (law of works) and made pious people worship God through the *Bhak'i Mṛg* (law of love.) Excepting *Bhakti* (love) he does not utter anything else. ' 258. The evil-minded determined to tie in a cloth all his manuscripts of poetry and threw them into the water; 259. just as seeing

the image of *Shaligrama* (Vishnu), the Muhammadans burn with anger at heart and with an evil intention think of breaking it; 260. as a parrot sits in his cage, singing the praise of Rama, but hearing such words, a hawk flies into a rage. 261. Ambarisha, on account of his observance of the *Ekadashi* (the 11th day of every fortnight), obtained great fame, but Durvas became jealous of him and came to persecute him; 262. in the same way the evil-minded entered Tuka's house and said, ' You teach principles contrary to religion and lead people to accept *bhakti* (the law of love). 263. That language of yours is Marathi and therefore impure. It should never be heard'. Saying this the villains took away with force his manuscripts of *abhangs*. 264. They made them into a bundle and put stones into it, and taking it to the bank of the River Indrayani they sank it in the river. 265. The Brahmans said, ' If within thirteen days the Life of the world takes them out dry, then only we shall honour them.' 266. Having said this they went to their houses. But Tuka's heart was full of grief; 267. just as when one makes a bottle of glass and it gets broken; or as when a folded silk cloth takes fire; 268. or as when a *bakul* tree is cut down by a goatherd and the gardener grieves at its loss; such was the condition of Tuka. 269. As a generous person feels sad when he sees wells filled up with earth in a forest without water; or as a *Vaishnava bhakta* feels sad at the destruction of Tulsi plants by a goat; 270. or as the cooking woman feels grieved when a dog touches daintily cooked food; 271. or as the jeweller is sad at heart when one throws a pearl into the fire thinking it to be a pebble; 272. in the same way Tuka's heart felt when the villains threw his manuscripts into the river. This mighty calamity was a severe blow to his love of God. 273. Tuka went into the temple and sat at the main door persistently, just as the stone step

before the door knows not how to stir. 274. Tuka cried, 'O Lord of Pandhari, Merciful to the lowly, why didst Thou cause me to labour for nothing? At last Thou didst permit this distress, the sinking of my manuscripts into the water. 275. Thou *Vanamali* (Krishna) didst appear to me in a dream and didst order and inspire me, ignorant as I was, to write the remaining verses of *Namdev*. 276. This being so, O Husband of Rukmini, why hast Thou brought this calamity on me? Well, do whatever Thou desirest, O Lord of Pandhari.' 277. Saying this, he contemplated Hari's form in his mind, and with his mouth repeated the mystic *mantra*, *Rama-Krishna-Hari*, with a heart full of love. 278. He ate no fruit, root, or any other food, and talked to no one. He gave up all desire and hope for his body and did not even drink water. 279. When the Life of the World saw Tuka in such extreme distress, He assumed the beautiful *Sagun* form of a child and the Husband of Rukmini came to console him. 280. He placed His assuring hand on his head and said, 'Quiet your mind. I, the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Vishnu), will rid you of any grievous calamity.' 281. Saying this He whose complexion is as dark as the *Tamal* leaf disappeared. Perhaps he found the pure lotus-heart of Tuka a fit place to sit upon. 282. *Chakrapani* (Krishna) disappeared just then and was happy. I think it was in the evening.

TUKARAM'S MANUSCRIPTS RECOVERED

283. In this way thirteen days passed, and lo and behold the revilers saw the manuscripts of Tuka floating on the water and the water had not touched the writing. 284. They said, 'We have unknowingly wronged and persecuted a *bhakta* of Vishnu. But the Life of the World is his Helper and He has freed him from this calamity. 285. With a repentant heart they went to the main door

of the temple, and said to Tuka, 'Shri Hari is pleased with you. 286. Your papers have come up dry. Now open your eyes and see.' Saying this, all the men bowed to him, 287. and added, 'What can we do to a man whose helper is the Husband of Rukmini? In a bottle of nectar, diseases cannot enter. 288. Into the abode of the sun, darkness will have no entrance. Into the lunar circle, heat cannot find a way. 289. Likewise, calamity will have no effect on a Vishnu-bhakta, even with great effort.' In this way, talking between themselves, they sang the names of God. 290. Tuka opened his eyes, and saw his manuscripts which the Brahmans had brought to the temple dry. 291. At this wonderful sight his mind was consoled; as the mind of a blind man is enraptured on obtaining his sight: 292. or as on pouring nectar into the mouth of a corpse, it breathes and sits up; so was Tuka delighted at heart and exclaimed, 'The Dweller of Pandharpur has favoured me.' 293. He joined his hands, and uttered seven *abhanga*s. That incomparable pleasure of love can hardly be described. 294. But listen to the purport of it with love. Tuka shut his eyes and overcome with love at heart he said, 295. 'Victory, Victory, O Shri Vitthal, I am a great sinner. In regard to people's censure I put my burden on Thee. 296. I gave Thee a great deal of trouble. I am a sinner, and low-born. I closed my eyes and sat at Thy door for thirteen days. 297. O Shri Hari, I put the distress of hunger and thirst on Thee. O Murari (Vishnu), Thou didst sit in the temple of my heart and didst preserve me, 298. Thou didst keep dry the papers and didst avert the public censure. O merciful One, Thou hast proved to be true Thy proud title, "The Helper of the helpless". 299. Assuming the form of a child, O Husband of Rukmini, Thou didst console me and with Thy own hand didst give me an assurance. 300. Now let them cut my throat and let

the wicked heap calamities on me; but never, never will I put Thee to trouble.'

TUKARAM PLEADS FOR PARDON

301. 'As for me, I am very wicked, impure and a sinner. I have certainly erred for once on this occasion. I made Thee stand in the water to protect my manuscripts. 302. I had no right to put my burden on Thee, the All-powerful. I a sinner did not know this, and acted without consideration. 303. O Shripati, what is done cannot be undone. But in future, O Husband of Rukmini, I will not put Thee to trouble. 304. O Shri Hari, I created trouble for Thee before anyone had placed a knife on my throat, or before I received a blow on my back. 305. Thy mind was divided in two places, in me and in the river. Thou didst avoid both the calamities, and hast increased my reputation in the public. 306. Should I say that Thou didst act as parents ! Nay, for they, even for a less cause, would kill their child. I have acted horribly: still Thou, O Life of the world, didst help me. 307. O *Chakrapani* (Vishnu), Thou art an Ocean of mercy. I do not see anyone like Thee in the three worlds. If I mean to praise Thee with love, my tongue becomes wearied. 308. Thou art the Brother of the helpless and merciful. Thou art cooler than the moon and as kind as a mother. Waves of love rise in me. 309. Thou art beyond speech, O Lord of gods. I find no simile befitting Thee. Thou art the Life of all beings. Shiva became quiet on muttering Thy name. 310. Thou art the source of the five chief elements. If I should say that Thou art as sweet as nectar, it is nothing. Thou, O Life of the world, art beyond it. 311. I will not say anything now. Silently will I place my head at Thy feet. I am a sinner without limit, O Vithabai. Pardon me, O loving One. 312. I am full of bad qualities and very unrighteous. How often shall

I say, "Enough, enough of this worldly life." It does not let my heart rest. 313. Scruples without end arise in my mind. Their forms change every moment. If I come in contact with them, my mind gets fastened on them. 314. O God of gods, O Lord of Pandhari, destroy all my anxiety. O Limitless One, put an end to the snare of my destiny, and dwell in the temple of my heart.

315. In this way Tuka pleaded with the Husband of Rukmini. Then going into the inner apartment of the temple, he embraced the god. 316. His eyes were fixed on the *Sagun* form of God. With his lips he was repeating the names of God.

TUKARAM'S SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE

Then (later) Tuka went to *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) with his body. 317. If I intend to write in detail that story, the Husband of Rukmini who is in my heart tells me, 'Tukaram still lives in this world.' 318. He visits his devoted and loving *bhaktas* in their dreams just as Dattatreya, the son of Anasuya, roams on earth at His will. 319. If the saints and good men doubt this, they should hear as evidence that he (Tuka) favoured Niloba with the mystic *mantra* in his dream. 320. If one's heart has pure love then Tukaram gives him the mystic *mantra*. That *guru* of the world is without comparison and still living. 321. He favoured me in solitude and caused me to write this work. Let not the wise entertain a doubt about this. 322. Tukaram, who pervades the whole universe and is a cloud of intelligence, is my *Sadguru*. I, Mahipati, am his sole suppliant without regard to my body.

323. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. Hearing it the Lord of the world will be pleased. Listen to it, O pious and loving *bhaktas*. This is the fifty-second very delightful chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER LIII

MANKOJI BODHLA THE *PATIL* OF DHAMANGAON

*Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lord of the
three Worlds.*

GOD AS CONTROLLER OF THE UNIVERSE

1. Victory to Thee, Ornament of the universe, Feeder of the universe. Thou art beyond *maya*, O Saviour of the World. Assumer of a *sagun* form, unchangeable, generous in giving the final deliverance, O *Guru* of the World!

2. Victory, victory to Thee, Controller of the wheel of *maya*, Wearer of a yellow silk garment, Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven), Father of the Lord of creation (Brahmadeva), the Saviour of the *Vedas*, O Pandurang.

3. O Lord of the world, Thou art alike to an elephant and an atom. The gods and Purandar (Indra, Lord of gods) obey Thee.

4. The sun and the moon traverse the sky, but Thou art their Regulator, just as a doll-player pulls the strings and makes the dolls dance.

5. The wind alone puts all trees into motion. Similarly, O Gopal, with Thy skill Thou dost give a turn to the universal globe.

6. The pores of Thy body contain the moveable and immoveable creation, O Lord of the World. It being so, Thou didst stand with Thy hands on Thy hips at the back of Pundalik.

7. Brahmadev and others do not know Thy limit; still Thou dost obey Thy *bhaktas*. Thou dost first throw them into various difficulties and then dost rush in person to their help.

8. Thou dost recline on the serpent Shesha, and on Thy banner is the emblem of the eagle. Lakshmi wishes for the dust of Thy feet. Still Thou dost stand to accept the worship of Thy *bhaktas*.

9. Although *Yogis* practise *vajrasan* (the spiked bed), still they cannot comprehend Thee. Thou dost dance without reserve, in the *kirtans* of

Thy loving *bhaktas*. 10. The lives of these *bhak'as* are wonderful, and Thou dost cause even me to describe them. Otherwise I am dull and have no independent talent to sing their praise. 11. In the previous chapter I related the wonderful story as to how the Lord of Pandhari was pleased with Tuka, and kept his papers dry for thirteen days in water.

MANKOJI BODHLA'S PHILANTHROPIC SPIRIT

12. Now let the listeners pay attention to the following interesting story. The saints know in Baleghat that there is the well-known town called Dhamangaon. 13. The *Patil* (official) of the place was Mankoji Bodhla, a loving *bhakta* of God. He was a *Shudra* by caste, and was surnamed 'Jagtap'. 14. Mamatai was his loving and dutiful wife. She did not do anything in her domestic affairs without her husband's consent. 15. Their first son was Yamaji by name and he was indifferent to worldly things. Their daughter-in-law, Bhagirathi, was a mine of good qualities. 16. These four lived in unity. In their domestic affairs they were quite indifferent to worldly things. Day and night they thought of the Lord of Pandhari and sang His praises. 17. In their house there was an abundance of wealth and grain. They were influential and commanded respect. Their cattle-shed was full of cows and oxen. 18. On every *Ekaadashi* (11th day of every fortnight), he devotedly went on a pilgrimage to Pandhari without fail. 19. On the sacred twelfth day, he fed the Brahmans and distributed food to the poor and hungry beggars. 20. On the thirteenth day he got up early, and returned to Dhamangaon. In this way many days passed, but finally there was a famine in the land. 21. The famine was very dreadful and grain was six seers a rupee. The poor could not afford to buy food. 22. Seeing this dreadful famine, pity arose in Bodhla's heart.

He said, 'The Lord of the world pervades all being. 23. Bodhla took his wife aside and advised her, 'Give food and drink to the poor as our means permit.' 24. To give food to the hungry, water to dry trees, clothes to the poor in the cold season, 25. to give medicine to travellers and sick persons, to pull out a drowning person, to marry a poor Brahman, 26. to save a house on fire, to cremate the dead for whom there is no one to help, to give water to the thirsty, 27. to stroke the weak cattle, to free ensnared game, to speak kindly to beggars, all these are means of storing up imperishable good deeds. 28. Such a possession of good deeds begets righteous indifference to worldly things and takes one to the feet of Shri Ram; and hindrances arising from sensual desires vanish. 29. Many others practise severe austerities. Their good deeds come to an end as soon as their fruit is enjoyed. But indifference to worldly things, arising from doing good to others, is permanent.' 30. In this way Bodhla advised his wife privately. The wife consented and behaved accordingly. 31. Kindly disposed to all beings, she distributed food to the famine-stricken. Her reputation spread in the whole country and beggars came rushing. 32. On a pile of sugar, ants and flies flock. Travellers go running under the shade of trees. 33. Beasts eagerly resort to the water near a mountain; similarly the hungry and thirsty came in large numbers to Bodhla's house. 34. Bodhla loaded his horse with provisions of food, on the tenth day of the fortnight started for Pandhari, and arrived there on the eleventh day and bathed in the Chandrabhaga. 35. With cymbals and Vina in his hands he visited the tomb of Pundalik. Then singing loudly the names of Hari he circumambulated the sacred town. 36. Lovingly he prostrated himself at the main door, entered the temple, and with full open eyes looked steadily on the form of God. 37. He embraced the god, and related his heart's secrets like a girl when she

returns from her husband's home opens her heart to her mother. 38. He placed his head at the god's feet and performed a *Kirtan* in the audience hall with the full din of delight during the four watches of the night, all awake. 39. He had the cooking performed by Brahmans and gave food to the hungry. Then taking leave of the god he returned home.

BODHLA'S POVERTY AND CONTENTMENT

40. Many days went by in this way and Bodhla spent in charity all his wealth and grain. He sold the jewellery of the house, he gave food to beggars. 41. His cows and oxen had to starve for want of fodder, so he distributed them to the people. In this way he sang the praises of God unhindered. 42. He earned his living by personal labour, and even out of this he gave something to satisfy the persons who came at meal-time, and also maintained his family. 43. Although reduced to poverty, Bodhla did not give up his resolve. With sincere love he pleaded with Govind and sang of His deeds. 44. The Husband of Rukmini was pleased at his devotion and privately manifested Himself to his sight. 45. The God of gods is not seen unless there is love in one's heart. Of what use is knowledge, without love and devotion? 46. Where there is pride of knowledge, sincerity of mind never comes at all. A grown-up tree does not know how to bend. 47. A grown-up Brahman finds it hard to commit to memory the hymns of the *Vedas*. A grown-up acrobat finds it difficult to bend his body. 48. When an earthen pot is well baked in fire, it cannot again be reduced to clay. Burnt seeds will never sprout. 49. So on account of knowledge sincerity disappears. Without love and faith *Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the heart) cannot be attained. 50. Therefore saints disregard pride of knowledge. The wise will never go near a *hinar* tree. 51. If I go on dilating upon the charac-

teristics of saints this book will tremendously increase. Seeing the sincere love of Bodhla, the Lord of Pandhari met him.

BODHLA'S BHAKTI

52. On an *Ekadashi* day (the 11th day of a fortnight), Bodhla started on a pilgrimage to Pandhari. He had no money to spend on his journey and his wife became very anxious. 53. 'After I bathe in the Chandrabhaga I shall have no money to give to a Brahman in charity. How can I feed the Brahmans on the twelfth day, O dear wife? 54. But I will fetch firewood and sell it in the bazaar of Pandhari.' Saying this he at once started for Pandhari. 55. His feet were without shoes and his blanket and other clothes were in tatters. He had rags around his head; still he sang the praises of Shri Hari. 56. He exclaimed, 'It is a great comfort that my house is swept clean of fortune. God has removed the snares of *maya* and freed me from earthly affairs. 57. The sky looks fair when clouds melt away. The Ganges flows steadily after mighty floods. 58. In the same way Bodhla's heart became quiet at the loss of his property and with love in his heart he continued to sing God's praises. 59. As he came near Pandhari, he took a load of fuel on his head and sold it for three pice. 60. With a repentant heart he bathed in the Chandrabhaga. He gave one pice to the Brahman who recited the bath-*mantra*. 61. With another he bought dry dates, the fragrant black powder (*buka*) and garlands of flowers. He then went into the temple and worshipped with love the cloud-complexioned One (Vithoba). 62. At night he listened to the *Hari-kirtan* and was awake during the four watches of the night.

KRISHNA AS A DECREPIT BRAHMAN APPROACHES

BODHLA

Then on the twelfth day he sat still with a sad heart. 63. Said he, 'I am unable to-day to give provisions of

food to a Brahman.' With three pies he bought half a seer of flour. 64. He tied it in the end of his blanket and sat on the bank of the Chandrabhaga thinking, 'I will consider myself fortunate if a Brahman comes to me. 65. I have no pulse, rice or salt. Who will accept the food of a poor man, when rich men come on pilgrimage and feed Brahmans in large numbers? 66. Who will lodge in a hut, leaving beautiful houses? Diners will not accept sour milk instead of good milk. 67. Why should Brahmans come to me, and set aside their rich patrons?' In this manner in spite of his dejection, he went on singing Shri Hari's praises. 68. The Merciful to the lowly and the Helper of the helpless seeing Bodhla's pure love came to him as a decrepit Brahman. 69. With stick in hand, cap on head and a worn out cloth around His waist, all trembling and in a hurry, the Lord of the world appeared in the sandy bed of the river. 70. The Life of the world said to Bodhla, 'You are my old patron. I live in the sacred town of Pandhari and bless you. 71. There are many other Brahmans who have rich patrons. I am weak and poor, and therefore none cares for me. 72. So, O Bodhla, I am hungry, and have come to see you. Whatever provisions you may have, give them quickly to Me.' 73. Bodhla felt satisfied when he heard the Brahman speak thus, and he said, 'The Husband of Rukmini is pleased with me.' 74. He untied the knot of his blanket, took out the flour and gave it to the Brahman, but at heart he felt abashed. 75. Said he, 'O *Swami*, there is only this flour without pulse or salt.' Listen to what the Dweller in *Vaikunth* replied: 76. 'Whatever you were able to give at this moment, you have given. Pulse and salt are not necessary,' said the One dark as a cloud. 77. Bodhla had a great desire to see the Brahman dine in his presence and the Lord of Pandhari knew this secret of his heart. 78. So the Husband of Rukmini said, 'I live in the temple. There is

no room to cook there. 79. If you collect some cowdung cakes for Me, I will prepare cakes just here and eat.' On hearing this, Bodhla was greatly pleased. 80. Then he thought to himself, ' The Brahman, as it were, has expressed my heart's desire;' and in the hollow of his blanket he collected some cowdung cakes.

VITHOBA AND RUKMINI COOK FOR BODHLA

81. The Brahman having bathed he wore a wet and worn-out cloth, and Bodhla brought fire from other pilgrims. 82. The Dweller in *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven), Who is as beautiful as a cloud, and seeing Whose fortune Lakshmi became the slave of His lotus-feet, sat to cook cakes. 83. He to Whom the Rishis in sacrifices give oblations by reciting the *Vedic* hymns, He, for the love of His *bhaktas*, is kneading flour with His own hands. 84. When Rukmini knew this, she came as an old woman to the spot where the Lord of Pandhara was cooking. 85. When the flame of a lamp is lowered, the light becomes dim; when a tree becomes old, creepers on it look yellowish; 86. as the drum is, so is the sound; as the flower, so the fragrance; among the clouds the lightning shines beautifully; 87. the colours suit a picture; the body is in likeness to one's disposition; the bean of *moog* (a sort of grain) grows as thick as the seed; 88. the sky becomes like the season; the river follows the stream; so on this occasion mother Rukmini assumed a likeness to suit her Husband's. 89. She had a mouth without any teeth and had earrings in her ears. She wore ornaments befitting her happy state of wifehood, saffron on her head, 90. and a white and worn-out garment. Supporting herself on her staff and stopping at intervals, she came along the sandy bed to search for the Life of the world. 91. She noticed *Chakrapani* (Krishna) in the act of kneading the flour in a pan and at this the Mother of the world chuckled.

92. 'Your patron has come for the pilgrimage; you left me behind, and have come here to cook all alone. 93. Here I am now to do the cooking.' Saying this Rukmini bathed and sat beside her husband. 94. 'You like to dine alone but now your wife has come to join you,' said the Mother of the world. At this Bodhla's heart became greatly satisfied.

VITHOBA AND RUKMINI DINE WITH BODHLA

95. Bodhla thought to himself, 'The food is very scanty. How can two have a meal? I cannot really understand.' 96. Where there is the Mistress of limitless powers, there all *siddhis* (accomplishments personified) come to serve, so at the mere touch of Her hand the food increased to abundance. 97. When the Bhagirathi (the river Ganges) places itself in a large earthen pot, how can the water become scanty? In the cowpen of wish-cows, there can be no lack of fodder. 98. At the wedding of the earth there cannot be any lack of room. So also where is mother Rukmini present, nothing will be lacking there. 99. She thought to herself, 'If I cook any dainties, Bodhla's mind will be hurt.' Therefore she cooked only cakes but they tasted more delicious than nectar.

100. Three plates were ready with food on them and the Life of the world said to His *bhakta*, 'You also accompany us at dinner, and receive a favour.' 101. Bodhla replied, 'O noble Brahman, I will not dine just yet. You both dine first and then give me the food left over on your plates.' 102. 'Very well,' said *Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the heart) and at once started to dine. The gods assembling in the sky watched the wonderful sight. 103. Invisible to men they conversed between themselves. They said, 'The Lord of the world Who is loving to His *bhaktas* goes after them. 104. Despite our efforts to persuade Him He never drinks nectar; seeing the love of Bodhla, He is eating

coarse food with love in his heart.' 105. After the Brahman and the *suvasini* (a woman enjoying the happy state of wifehood) had dined, Bodhla was given the food left on their plates, and in the twinkling of an eye the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna) vanished out of sight.

KRISHNA EJECTED FROM A DINNER PARTY

106. Then only it occurred to Bodhla that *Chakrapani* (Krishna) had come dressed as a Brahman, and after making him happy had gone away. 107. So Bodhla lovingly ate the food left on the plates as a favour. Then he went to the temple and thus addressed the god: 108. 'O Life of the world, Thou who art loving to Thy *bhaktas*, today Thou didst enjoy coarse food. Forsaking rich and large dinner-parties Thou in Thy great mercy hast honoured me, humble as I am.' 109. The Husband of Rukmini replied, 'I go also to that place where the Brahmans are fed with dainties, but no one cares to feed Me.' 110. To Bodhla, Vithoba said in addition, 'Tomorrow I will show you a wonder.' It chanced that a rich person had planned to feed a thousand Brahmans 111. Preparations having been made day and night, invitations were given to the Brahmans. A list of their names having been prepared, 112. a large canopy with cloth sides was put up in the sandy bed and the next day cooking was in progress. The Brahmans who had been asked to be ready bathed and occupied their places opposite their plates. 113. As they examined the list the number came to a thousand. Then *Athokshaja* (Krishna) said to Bodhla, 'Now I will show you a wonder.' 114. Then the Life of the world dressed Himself as an old Brahman. Around His waist was a worn-out garment. He had a staff in His hand, and His neck trembled. 115. In this guise He started off and said to Bodhla, 'Mark the wonder from a distance.' 116. Coming near to the lines of the Brah-

mans the Life of the world and said, 'I am a hungry Brahman and wish for a dainty dish.' 117. They replied, 'Get away, you cannot be accommodated here.' Hearing this the Recliner on the serpent Shesha said, 118. 'Here there are a thousand Brahmans. Cannot *one* uninvited guest be cared for?' As the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) said this, hear what the rich men said to Him in return: 119. 'When the invited Brahmans are present, where is the necessity of anyone uninvited? Many such as you will come; how are we to supply them with food?' 120. The Lord of the world then obstinately sat before a plate. Bodhla was watching this wonderful sight and become astonished. 121. The rich man then ordered his servants to throw the Brahman out. No one had any sort of consideration, and they forced the Lord of *Vaikunth* to leave His place. 122. Some held him by his hands and feet and others pulled him by his hair, saying, 'This Brahman is a great bully; he comes and sits before a plate obstinately.' 123. In this way they talked between themselves and pulled the Brahman away but the Life of the world managed to remain. 124. In the meantime ghee was served on the plates, the priest offered the opening prayer and the Brahmans sipped water and began to dine. 125. The Sporter in (or Enjoyer of) *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) as He saw it started to return, just as the Enemy of the Demon Tripur (Shiva) gets angry with an ascetic and is off.

DINNER PARTY IN DISASTER AFTER KRISHNA LEFT

126. When life leaves the body the latter is in extreme distress. So as soon as the Husband of Rukmini turned His back a great disaster took place. 127. A violent wind broke out, the sky was filled with dust, the plates were thickly covered with earth and they flew in all directions. 128. The canopy with its wall of cloth fell down, and all the Brahmans were scattered. God showed this wonderful

sight to Bodhla at which he felt astonished. 129. As soon as the Life of the world turned His back all the Brahmans got up and left the place. If roots are not watered how can any branches grow? 130. If the mother of the bridegroom leaves the wedding canopy, how can the females in the wedding party dine? If the cow does not give milk to its calf, how will the master of the house milk the cow? 131. The One dark as a cloud enjoys food through the mouths of Brahmans, and Him the god Shiva contemplates at heart. But when He was displeased, a great disaster at once fell. 132. Then the Lord of *Vaikunth* thus addressed Bodhla:—‘All these men are hypocrites. I saw your pure love and I ate the coarse food with relish. 133. I refused Duryodhan’s invitation to dine and ate kernels at Vidur’s house. For the sake of a vegetable leaf of chaste Draupadi I went to her as a guest at midnight. 134. With love did I eat the food left over by the cowherds. The food brought to me by the wives of *Rishis* I ate with great delight. 135. The cowherds first ground the morsel in their mouths and then put the same into My mouth and I considered it as very pure.’ As the Life of the world thus spoke, the loving *bhakta* was greatly pleased 136. and Bodhla said, ‘O Life of the world, Thy limit is not known to anyone.’ Saying this he clasped His feet. 137. Chokhamela was a loving *Vaishnava bhakta* and the One dark as a cloud ate the ghee offered by him. He also ate with loving delight the tasty fruits of a female Bhil.

THE WONDER ON BODHLA’S RETURN JOURNEY

138. Then taking leave of God, Bodhla returned to Dhamangaon and on his way he came to a barren tract of land. 139. Overcome with hunger and thirst, he did not see that a town was close by. The Life of the world knowing the heart of His servant came there to help him.

140. By a mere wish He created a garden at the sight of which the traveller felt relief. 141. The Lord of *Vaikuṇṭh* became the gardener and began working a *mote* (the bucket of a bullock-drawn well) at the well, while the chaste Rukmini became the female gardener and sat waiting for the *bhakta*. 142. Bodhla saw this but he felt in no way inclined to go into the garden. He considered cold, heat, sorrow and joy as equal and sang God's praises. 143. Then Rukmini put some bread, sour milk, fruits and roots in a basket, took it on her head and came before him. 144. She said to Bodhla, 'Why do you not come into our garden? The gardener saw you from a distance and is waiting for you. 145. You are a *warkari* (pilgrim) of Pandhari. Just come and sanctify our home. If you are thirsty or hungry you need not feel any reserve.' 146. Bodhla was astonished at heart, saying 'Nobody has ever lived in this place.' He entered the garden and rested there awhile. 147. After eating some roots and fruits he set off for Dhamangaon, but as he looked over his shoulders he could see nothing. 148. Said he, 'Because I was very hungry, the Lord of Pandhari created this illusory scene.' When he reached home, he related to his wife the whole event.

THE PLEA OF BODHLA'S WIFE

149. One day Bodhla was watching his field. Contemplating *Adhokshaja* (Krishna) in his mind he began to repeat the names of God. 150. Said he, 'When they put a handful of grain into the seed-box of a drill-plough, then only the world prospers. So why should I drive away the birds? It is merely giving them pain. 151. They who are destined to have their food in the farm, let them with pleasure eat it. For the Husband of Rukmini is in all beings; so the ancient saints have said. 152. Tying the sling around his head, with a repentant heart he began to repeat the names of God. In the meantime his wife arrived

there with bread in a basket. 153. After serving him with food, Mamatai said to him, 'If you give the green pea to beggars, what will be our condition?' 154. We have as yet to pay the government revenue. Besides, we need the grain for our maintenance. Therefore, O husband, bear my advice in mind. 155. I request you in the name of Vithoba that you do not give away any more pods.' Saying this she returned home.

BODHLA LETS PILGRIMS EAT UP HIS GREEN PEAS

156. At the same time a great number of pilgrims were going to Pandhari singing the praises of Hari with delight. As Bodhla saw them he felt glad at heart. 157. He got down from the loft and prostrated himself before them when a Brahman who was walking in advance said, 'The heart of this man is very tender.' 158. Then the Brahman said to him, 'O you Vishnu-*bhakta*, you are our feeder in famine. If you give me some pods I shall be glad, for I am hungry.'

159. As he heard the noble Brahman's request, pity arose in his mind and he said, 'My wife has just warned me in God's name not to give the green pods to anyone and has gone home. 160. However, you can go into the farm and take as many pods as you like.' The Brahman was glad at heart as he heard this 161. and while he was plucking the pods, the other pilgrims saw them in his hands. 162. Loudly shouting the names of Vitthal they requested Bodhla, 'If you give us some pods too, Shri Hari will favour you. 163. There is a great scarcity of grain in the land and the corn is three *payalis* (a measurement) a rupee. If you give grain in charity at this critical time you will surely store up good deeds without number.' 164. Bodhla was glad at heart on hearing them and said, 'Blessed is this day for I have met with saints.' 165. Then he said to the pilgrims, 'You can

pluck the pods yourselves; although my wife has warned me in the name of God (not to give them away).' He then returned home. 166. There were two hundred pilgrims who all entered into his field and stripped clean the *jondhala* (cereal grain) before they left. 167. The news that Bodhla's field had been stripped of its grain reached the town, hearing which all men and women there were astonished. 168. Some called him very generous; others a profuse squanderer; while some said that the Husband of Rukmini cared for his domestic life. 169. Knowing that his wife and son would worry him he did not go back into the town, but contemplating in his mind the Life of the world he began to sing His praises with love. 170. When the eldest son came there to ascertain the news he saw the stalks without ears, and was very sad at heart. 171. He sat there overcome with sorrow and as the father knew of it he advised his son in an *abhang*.

BODHLA'S COUNSEL TO HIS SON

172. Said he, ' O my dear son, listen to the definition of life. Your mind is very narrow. The bees store honey but starve themselves. 173. Then the forester comes, drives away the bees and takes away the comb of honey. The bees thus go into a forest and struggle for nothing. 174. In the same way, people with stinginess carry on their worldly affairs but when the hour of spoiling comes, they will at last give away their wealth and grain. 175. To-day the produce of the field is spent on worthy men. Then why should you have any anxiety about this ?' As the loving *bhakta* of God thus spoke, repentance was impressed on the son's heart. 176. Young deer do not require a lesson in springing; the young ones of birds do not find it hard to fly; 177. and there is no necessity of a raft for the young fish; in the same way Yamaji's repentance was no difficult matter.

178. Yamaji then fell at his father's feet, and holding his hand, took him home and related the whole story to Mamatai his mother. 179. The wife felt satisfaction as she realized that the grain in their field had been distributed amongst the pilgrims. She felt the distribution of grain had been in a good cause, and that it was the result of good deeds stored up in their previous births.

VILLAGERS CONSPIRE AGAINST BODHLA

180. The wife was satisfied, no doubt, but the evil-minded and the revilers said amongst themselves, 'We do not know how he will pay the Government revenue.' 181. The villagers prepared a list of revenue payers and fixed seven *hons* (silver coins) against Bodhla's name. Listen to what they said among themselves: 182. 'In his state of pecuniary disability, Bodhla has his field stripped of its produce (by the pilgrims of Pandhari). He shouts God's names day and night and plays with cymbals lovingly. 183. Therefore first recover the *hons* (revenue) from him, and then we will all pay ours.' With this firm resolve they forwarded the report to the Government. 184. They said, 'If anyone opposes this proposal, he will have to pay for Bodhla.' Then they sent the *havaladar* (revenue officer) to his house, who said, 'Pay the *hons* at once.' 185. But there were only three *hons* in his house and despite very great effort he could not obtain a fourth.

NAGAU THE WOMAN MONEY-LENDER

In the town there was a Brahman lady by the name of Nagau who was a money-lender. 186. After the night had advanced three hours Bodhla went to her house and said, 'Take the interest in advance, but lend me four *hons* at once.' 187. 'Certainly,' said the money-lender; 'to-morrow morning I will lend you the *hons*.' Bodhla then left and returned to his house. 188. A big pot full of

money she had buried underground she at once dug out and took four *hons* out of it.

189. Next day she heard in an indirect way in the town how he had had his field stripped clean of its corn by the pilgrims. 190. Then Nagau thought to herself, 'If I lend him the *hons*, they may never come back. If I lend, being tempted by the interest, the principal itself may be lost. 191. If I care for the chaff, the bullocks may eat the grain. If I take care of the pot of sour milk, the good milk may be spoiled. 192. A maund is thus lost for half a maund. "Penny wise, and pound foolish" is a popular saying.' 193. Well, the next day Bodhla went to Nagau and asked for the *hons*. She replied, 'I depended for them on another person and I promised you, 194. but now he refuses to lend. How can I help it? And there is no other money-lender in the town of Dhamangaon.'

195. At this reply of Nagau, the God-loving *bhakta* left the place and returned home. With an anxious mind he said to his wife, 196. 'I am in great trouble on account of the revenue. I can nowhere borrow four *hons*. So I will now go to Raleras at once and try to find out a money-lender.' 197. So addressing his wife, Bodhla at once started. As he was journeying, in his mind he sang Shri Hari's praises. 198. 'O Govind Gopal, Shripati, Saviour of the world, the image of Brahma (which is wanting in form), O Thou of *Sagun* Form, let me have love for singing Thy praises for ever.'

KRISHNA AS A MAHAR HELPS BODHLA

199. A rumour was afloat in the town that Bodhla had absconded. Therefore a bailiff came and blocked his door. 200. The cattle and calves were shut up in the house and He would not let in fire or even water. 201. As the evil-minded got up such a disaster the Lord of Pandhari was full of compassion. Said he, 'My *bhakta* is in danger,

So I must do something to free him from it. 202. Had he not had his field plundered, this calamity would not have happened'. Then assuming the form of an out-caste the Husband of Rukmini came. 203. The Holder of the *Sharang* bow took the form of Vithya Mahar who lived in the town. He took seven *hons* and went to the *chawdi* (village office). 204. 'Johar, my mother and father, Mankoji Patil sends these *hons* by me.' Saying this the Life of the world handed over the money to the *Chaugula* (village revenue officer) and was off. 205. Then the villagers collected the revenue and sent it in a bag to the Government Treasury at once. They said between themselves,) 'Where could Bodhla have had this money from at this difficult time?'

206. On the day following the loving *bhakla* returned with the *hons*. As the Government revenue was paid up no complaint was heard in the town. 207. The *Chaugula* then said to him, 'You sent by a Mahar the money which as soon as we received it, was sent to the King's Treasury.' 208. He asked his wife and son about it but they replied that they did not know. Then Vithya Mahar was sent for at once, and asked. 209. He said, 'I have not food enough even for a day in my house. How is it possible that I should pay the revenue for you at the village office?'

210. As Bodhla heard what the Mahar said, he understood in his mind that it was the Husband of Rukmini who had lovingly come to relieve him of his distress. 211. His throat was choked with emotion, tears ran from his eyes, and he cried, 'O Merciful to the lowly, and the Lord of the helpless, Thou didst worry Thyself for my sake. 212. O Dweller on the ocean of milk, O Lord of Pandhari, why didst Thou take the guise of an out-caste? I have given up all affection for the earthly life and come to Thy feet. 213. The singing of Thy praise has made me crazy; and I do not care for what the people say. I have

no regard for this perishable and solid body. 214. Now come and meet with me in Thy *sagun* form.' Seeing Bodhla's pure devotion the Lord of Pandhari fulfilled his wish. 215. Bodhla met with God and asked Him how He had paid the revenue for him. Listen to what the Friend of the helpless replied to His clever *bhakta*: 216. 'After your departure to Raler, the villagers created a great nuisance to your household. Then I stole away four *hons* of Nagau. 217. I added three which I found in your house to these, and thus paid seven *hons* at the village office.' As the Lord of Pandhari said this Bodhla laughed, 218. and said, 'O Merciful to the lowly, Lord of Pandhari, why didst Thou take the poor woman's *hons*? Now I will give her these which I have brought as a loan.' 219. The Life of the world then said, 'If you give her back the *hons* I will do away with her buried treasure in a moment.' 220. At this Bodhla clasped God's feet and said, 'Might is right.'

After this the Recliner on the serpent Shesha performed another miracle at Dhamangaon. 221. The green pods were stripped off by the pilgrims; but now the stalks were full of ears. The grain cellars which were lying empty for a long time were all filled with grain. 222. At this wonderful sight all the people were astonished and said, 'It seems the Life of the world is pleased with Bodhla.' 223. The Merciful to the lowly, the Husband of Rukmini, increases the reputation of His *bhaktas*. Mahipati, His badge-bearer, extols the virtues of saints.

224. *Svasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Bhaktavijaya*. The Lord of the world will be pleased as He listens to it. O ye loving and pious *bhaktas*, listen to it. This is the fifty-third very delightful chapter.

CHAPTER LIV

MANKOJI BODHLA THE PATIL

(Continued)

Obeisance to Shri Ganes. Obeisance to the Husband of Radha

INVOCATION

GOD'S GRACE WORKS WONDERS

1. Victory, victory to Thee, Pervader of the Universe and Husband of Rukmini. Thou surely art my fortune, my mother, father and brother. Without Thee there is no rest. 2. Thou art my object of listening and thinking. Thou art my Sanskrit and Marathi languages also. 3. Thou art my skill, the speaker, and the One who causes me to speak. O beautiful as a cloud, Thou art the object of my love, O Merciful to the lowly, Shripati. 4. Thou art the unerring writer, Thine is vast ability, O Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). Thou art my eternal happiness, my *Sadguru* and Saviour. 5. Thou art my loving listener, the Giver of timely memory, O Infinite One. Avarice and attachment do not trouble one where there is Thy mercy. 6. O Husband of Laxmi, Thy grace makes the fool wise, just as at the sudden rise of the sun the darkness of night disappears. 7. Then darkness turns to light, without doubt. In the same way ignorance is uprooted by Thy grace. 8. When the *paris* (touchstone) comes in contact with iron, how can iron rust exist? When a streamlet flows into the Ganges it becomes sacred. 9. In the same way, on whom Thou dost look of Thy own free will with an eye of grace, his fame will spread in the three worlds and will have no comparison. 10 Thy *bhaktas* who are God-loving and indifferent to worldly things do not forget Thee even for a moment. Cause me to write the marvellous lines of those saints.

PRECEDING CHAPTER REVIEWED

11. At the end of the previous chapter the Life of the world showed a miracle. In a moment he filled up all the grain-cellars of Bodhla. 12. The green grain in his field was distributed amongst the pilgrims and the stalks became full of ears. At this extraordinary miracle all wondered. 13. They said, 'Bodhla is an *avatar* of God. He should not be called an ordinary man. We are ignorant and mean and therefore we persecuted him. 14. The grain-cellars formerly empty were now filled with grain, and Bodhla had them looted by the Brahmans; as the *mogra* (fragrant flowering tree) when it has flowers gives them to those who like to enjoy them; 15. as honey accumulates in lotus-flowers, they give it to the bees; or as clouds pour the water accumulated in them on the earth, 16. in like manner, *Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the Heart), being pleased, gave corn to Bodhla. He became indifferent to earthly things and distributed corn amongst the Brahmans. 17. The stalks were full of ears and people rushed to see them. Bodhla's reputation travelled from country to country so that people said, 'Extraordinary is the power of saints.'

THE STORY OF HANSI

18. One day while the loving *bhakta* sat watching his field, Hansi, a female slave, suddenly came and fell at his feet. 19. If you want to know who she was just listen to her story. At a distance of four miles from Dhamangaon there was another village called Raleras. 20. The *Patil* or *Mukaddam* (two titles for the chief man) of that place was Bodhla's father-in-law. When he died and went to the home of salvation Mamatai was deprived of her mother's home. 21. She had two brothers, evil-minded both of them. They never inquired about Mamatai. They were very proud and their actions were very bad.

22. Hansi was a slave at their house. Her heart was very pious and she was ever in the habit of singing Hari's praises while she did her household work. 23. The boundaries of Raleras and Dhamangaon were near each other. The *Vaishnava bhakta* (Bodhla) was once cultivating the field near Raleras. 24. The fields of the two impious brothers of Raleras and that of Bodhla were side by side. They had employed Hansi the slave solely to watch the field. 25. Bodhla every day sat on the high seat in his field and sang the praises of Hari. The slave Hansi came there, and listened to him with love.

BODHLA ON WOMEN AND SLAVES

26. She at once clasped the feet of the loving *bhakta* and said, 'Tell me some means by which my earthly life will be fruitful.' 27. Bodhla heard her and thought to himself, 'She is bodily dependent. She is not able to repeat the praises of God or practice austerities, or meditate, or visit sacred places. 28. The lives of male and female slaves and of a wife are entirely dependent and can only be compared with the lives of cows, bullocks, and horses. 29. Because they had in store a great quantity of bad deeds they were born as such. They are not able to practise any vow without interruption. 30. If I should observe silence her love will suffer.' So thinking the *Vaishnavu* addressed her: 31. 'O Hansi, hear what I say. You asked me about the means of salvation. As you perform the household work, just be thinking of Shri Hari. 32. On every *Ekadashi* (11th day of the fortnight) observe a fast, and in the evening come to Dhamangaon to listen to the *Hari-kirtan*. 33. After listening to it for four watches, return to your village the next morning. Take the permission of your master and continue this as a practice. 34. Your life will be fruitful and you will attain to the feet of Pandurang, and

will have a *sagun* manifestation of God. Have no doubt about this. 35. Hansi clasped the feet of Bodhla as she heard his advice, and said, 'On *ekadashi* I will come to Dhamangaon.'

SAINTS' ADVICE ADAPTED TO NEEDS

36. Saints advise means of salvation according to one's worth. A good physician first thinks of the disease and then administers medicine. 37. A king sits on his throne and commands each minister his duties. The mistress of a house with wisdom controls her daughters-in-law. 38. A wise lender of money lends in accordance to one's business. A clever speaker first looks at his audience and then performs his *kirtan* to suit their ability. 39. The sculptor first examines the softness or the hardness of a stone and then uses his chisel. In the same way, the saints first see the worth of their disciple and then advise as to the means of salvation. 40. Well, Hansi bore in in her mind the advice of Bodhla and as she did her household work with love, she repeated the names of God. 41. On the day of *Hari* (*Ekadashi*) she got up early and after performing quickly all her work with the permission of her master she went to Dhamangaon to attend the *kirtan* there.

A MAN BITTEN BY A SERPENT RESTORED TO LIFE

42. Bodhla's *kirtan* was very interesting. Even the ignorant could understand it thoroughly. The inhabitants of Bhovargaon came to listen to it with great love. 43. So many men and women came to listen that his house could not contain them. Therefore he stood in the public road and performed his *kirtan* there with love. 44. Hansi filled two large earthen vessels with water for the use of the people and herself swept the place of the *kirtan* clean. 45. The sky was the canopy, the earth served as a large carpet, and at hearing the loud sound of Bodhla's

kirtan the gods were delighted. 46. On an *Ekadashi* day as the villagers of Raleras were going to the *kirtan*, just near the village one of them was bitten by a snake. 47. At once the man vomited blood and died on the spot. The men who were with him lifted him up and seated him in the *kirtan*. 48. They thought among themselves that the secret should not be divulged to anyone. Bodhla was explaining the power of the name of Rama to the people. 49. He said, 'By the power of Rama's name the *bhakta* Pralhad was not burnt to death when thrown into fire. Even a poison turns to nectar; such is the evident power of God's name.' 50. The people who brought the dead man thought: 'We shall lay the blame at his (Bodhla's) door. We shall say, "This man's life left him just in the *kirtan*. If you bring him to life again, then only will we consider as true the power of the name of God."' 51. Saying this, they listened to the *kirtan* in silence, while Bodhla explained to the people the incomparable power of the name of God. 52. Said he: 'Hear, hear all of you the name of God costs nothing and is very purifying. It is sweeter than nectar. This I say from personal experience. 53. Therefore let all clap their hands, and shout loudly the names of Vitthal.' As the audience heard him say it, they lovingly shouted (the names of Vitthal). 54. The men who had seated the dead body in the *kirtan* said to Bodhla, 'This man who is sitting in front of us does not utter Hari's names.' 55. Bodhla did not know that he had died of a serpent-bite. Then listen to what the God-loving *bhakta* said to the corpse: 56. 'Bapa, you have obtained a human body, so do not neglect singing the praises of Hari. Now clap your hands and repeat loudly the names of God.' 57. The Lord of Pandhari who acts as one in a play, as He heard what His *bhakta* said to the dead body, thought to Himself, 58. 'Bodhla does not know that he is without life, and if he does not repeat the names of

God, his (Bodhla's) mind will be sad. 59. I Pandurang, am near him, and the pleasure of the *kirtan* will melt away if I do not help him.' Then the Husband of Rukmini with His own mouth commanded *Yamadharma* (the god of death), 60. 'At once bring back the life into the dead body that is sitting in the *kirtan*.' Hearing the speech of the Ocean of mercy, the god of death said 'Surely.' 61. At once the dead body got up and clapped hands and clasped the feet of Bodhla. 62. Then his companions got up and told Bodhla the whole story. As the listeners heard it they all wondered. 63. With shouts of 'Victory, Victory' they clapped their hands, the *bhaktas* of God were delighted, and from the lotus-eyes of Bodhla gushed out streams of tears. 64. Said he, 'O God of gods, Merciful to Thy *bhaktas*, Thou helpest me in my *līlā* (doings), helpless as I am. Had I known of the accident I would have felt sad. 65. As a mother picks out a fly from the food of her child without letting it know of it; in the same way, Thou Husband Of Rukmini, without letting us know about it dost prevent disaster to us.' 66. In this way pleading with the Husband of Kamala (Vishnu), he waved over the Husband of Shri Rukmini auspicious lights and prostrated himself before Him in love.

HANSI TO BE SOLD

67. The inhabitants of Dhamangaon said that Bodhla was a divine *avatar* and that he had come to the world of mortals to save mankind. 68. Hansi's love increased day by day after she saw with her own eyes the bringing to life of a dead body. 69. Every fortnight she went to Dhamangaon to listen to the *kirtan*. This went on for three years but suddenly an impediment occurred. 70. As a candidate in spiritual life (*sadhaka*) is performing the praise-service of God, and a great disaster comes upon him; or as a

cat to overcome a pot of milk; 71. or as all diseases appear as a result of unwholesome diet; or as death watches for ever the body; or as a practiser of *yoga* is privately ensnared in this power by his very accomplishments; 72. or as a thief watches a store of wealth; or as a tiger tries to catch a wild animal; or as *Rahu* (darkness) comes in the way of the queen of the night (the moon) 73. so in (Hansi's) service of God a disaster was about to intrude. Now let the listeners pay loving attention to her story. 74. The slave, as she had Bodhla's favour, had complete spiritual knowledge. She used to listen to the *kirtan* on every *Ekadashi* and go back all alone. 75. She had a belief in the name of God and was for ever intent on meditating Him. Thus passed three years when suddenly a great disaster befell her devotion.

76. Hansi's sister, Mamatai, had two brothers-in-law who wanted to live separately. So they offered their slave Hansi for sale. 77. The news indirectly spread in the town, and had reached her ears. She was worn out with anxiety and said, 'Powerful is my fate indeed.' 78. She finished her duties, however, went on to Dhamangaon and when alone with Bodhla clasped his feet. 79. Her throat was choked with emotion. From her eyes tears flowed. Seeing her in such a condition the loving *bhakta* addressed her thus: 80. 'O Hansi, at seeing your pitiful condition I am very much perplexed. Explain the anxiety of your heart to me.' 81. Hansi said, 'O dear Bodhla, you are my father, my mother, and my dear friend. From to-day I am to be separated from Your feet. 82. My masters have offered me for sale, and a customer also has come from a distance. Now, O Swami, how will your *kirtan* fall on my ears?' 83. Bodhla said, 'O mother, hear me. You must go to the place where the deeds in your former life will compel you to go. Then why are you sorry for nothing?' 84. Waves of water in the ocean

flow about, but they are not apart from the water, as all witness. 85. In the same way Shri Pandurang is the Ocean of delight. and we human beings are its waves. Try to understand this in your mind. Then you will not feel sorry on account of our separation.' 86. To this Hansi replied, 'I do not weep for this. I enjoyed your company on the boundaries of both the towns, but I shall now have no more of it.' 87. Saying this much she fainted and then collecting herself, she went into the house to talk. 88. She said to Mamatai, 'Your brothers have offered me for sale, therefore, O mother, I am fallen into an ocean of sorrow. 89. Please keep me in your house and pay them my cost.' Saying this she prostrated herself at her feet. 90. Seeing the condition of the slave, pity arose in Mamatai's heart, and she said, 'She must be freed by some means or another. 91. If we have not money (to buy her), we will sell our hereditary property at Dhamangaon.' But she determined to free the helpless one.

BODHLA OFFERS TO BUY HANSI

92. The kind Bodhla went into the house and gave to Hansi an assurance of security. Said he, 'You go ahead to your master's house and I will follow you quickly.' 93. This promise gave her a great comfort, just as the sprinkling of nectar on a dead body would give it; 94. or as when clouds pour their water on a forest fire, the fire is put out and the trees gain coolness and sprout newly; 95. in the same way the slave was comforted at the assurance of Bodhla. Then she at once returned to Raleras. 96. Then dear Bodhla followed her there and said to her brothers-in-law, 'I indirectly hear that you intend to sell your slave. 97. If that is true, then send her to my house. I will pay you whatever you ask for her.' 98. As they heard Bodhla, evil-minded as they

were, they flew into a rage and said, 'We won't let our slave into *Your* house, to be sure, 99. You have your ancestral property just near the boundary of our village. We will give her to someone else for nothing, but never to *You*.' 100. As the Vishnu *bhakta* (Bodhla) heard this arrogant reply, he was silent. Hansi who was weeping bitterly in the house said, 'Adverse is my fate ! 101. Then kind Bodhla said to Hansi, 'I will request Vithoba and take you to my house. This I say in the presence of my relatives.' 102. Saying this he returned to Dhamangaon and related to his wife everything that had happened. 103. A great fear arose in the minds of the evil-minded at Raleras. They thought that Bodhla would request Vithoba and have her killed by Him. 104. 'He has uttered his promise here, and that will never be untrue. Therefore a customer should be immediately sent for and she should be sold to *him*.' 105. The buyer who belonged to another town came there that very day and bought Hansi and her daughter. 106. They paid twenty-five *hons* (silver coins) and took in writing the sale-deed. The slave Hansi cried bitterly and said, 'O Lord of Pandhari, why dost Thou not come? 107. O Merciful to the lowly, Lord of Pandhari, rush to my help. Otherwise I shall give up all affection for my body, and commit suicide. 108. Bodhla has said to me that Vithoba will come and take me away. I think his words will not come true to-day.' 109. But the Lord of Pandhari knows the desire of His *bhaktas*, and in a Brahman's garb *Ananta* (the Infinite One) appeared there. 110. *Adhokshaja* (Krishna) stood in the yard of the evil-minded brothers and said to Hansi. 'Bodhla calls you.' 111. Hearing the words of the Brahman, the slave was delighted at heart and she clasped the Brahman's feet lovingly. 112. O pious *bhaktas*, listen with reverence to the wonder that now took place. The Lord of Pandhari disappeared there, taking the slave Hansi with

Him. 113. Hansi had a small daughter and she also was taken to *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). The relatives of Bodhla as they saw the wonderful sight were very much astonished. 114. They exclaimed, ' It is a great wonder. Where could she have gone to along with her body ? ' The customer replied, ' I clearly see that luck is not favourable to me. 115. I did not take the slave to my town, for she disappeared just here. Therefore return my money.' 116. The evil-minded said, 'We have given you the deed of sale, and now we are not at all responsible. 117. The Brahman who had come to invite (the slave) gave the name of Bodhla, so you go to Dhamangaon and complain to him.' 118. On this the customer said, ' We have heard indirectly that Bodhla asked you to sell the slave to him. 119. But you did not give her to him; then at the time of departing he said that Vithoba would certainly take her away. 120. It has happened just as he said it would; therefore I need not go to him to complain. You at once pay me back my money.' 121. In this way a quarrel ensued between three men. The Lord of Pandhari is the Advocate of His *bhaktas*. He increases the fame of His servants.

A MAHAR REFUSED A MYSTIC MANTRA BY VITHOBA

122. You pious *bhaktas*, listen to another wonderful account. In Dhamangaon there was a Mahar (an Untouchable), a very mischievous and garrulous fellow. 123. He said to Bodhla privately, ' Please give me the mystic *mantra*. I have deep love for your feet and therefore I make this request.' 124. The loving *bhakta* as he heard him said, ' It is not to *anybody* that I give the mystic *mantra*. If the Lord of Pandhari permits it, well and good; I will ask Him in private.' 125. Then he brought the Lord of *Vaikunth* into his mind and said, ' O God, hear a request of mine. The Unmentionable (a Mahar) of my village seems to me to be a simple-minded man. 126. For many days he

has been after me to place my hand on his head. If You permit, then only will I accept him (as my disciple).' 127. The Life of the World said to Bodhla in reply, 'We must not give the mystic *mantra* to a man of the low caste, 128. one who is always a disbeliever at heart and who does not like to listen to the *Shastras*; to such a man a *Sadguru* ought not to give such a favour. 129. He who first sees the *practical* outcome of the sacred books and then reads them time and again for the purpose of fulfilling his sensual desires, a *Sadguru* should not give the mystic *mantra* to such a disciple. 130. He who with a mischievous heart asks the reader again and again the explanation of the thing read, a *Sadguru* should not look upon him with an eye of mercy. 131. The disciple should be a knowing one, and indifferent to worldly things, or he should at least be a simple and a loving *bhakta*.' In this way the Husband of Rukmini advised Bodhla in private. 132. 'As for this man, he is *Anāmik* (Unmentionable) and of a low caste, very wicked, cruel and evil-minded. If you do not believe what I say, you try him just once. 133. Tomorrow, O chief of my *bhaktas*, perform the worship of the heap of thrashed corn in your field, send for the Mahar and have a bullock of yours killed by him; 134. show him in kind words that he should not divulge the secret to anyone, and if he keeps it a secret, then give him the mystic *mantra*.' 135. Bodhla replied, 'O Lord of Pandhari, I will never arrange a slaughter. Why should I have a bullock killed for nothing? I do not like it.' 136. At this the Husband of Rukmini said, 'My command is your authority. I will not let the blame of killing attach to you.' 137. The next day the Mahar came to Bodhla and held him by his feet and said, 'Please give me that favour now.' 138. Mankoji Bodhla said to the Mahar, 'Listen. On the heap of corn in my field kill one of my bullocks, but let no one know of this.

Then only will you be my true disciple.' 139. 'Surely, replied the Unmentionable who then killed a bullock. Then he had the beef cooked in a different house from his and had bread and rice cooked. 140. Bodhla got together his relatives to pay worship to the heap of corn, and as they were served with the beef and bread they very much wondered. 141. They said, 'Bodhla's conduct is changed. He practises slaying. He has killed a goat, and has given a dinner to the *kunbis* (or farmers) tonight.' 142. But no one knew that he had had a bullock killed, and all dined and went back to their homes. 143. Bodhla said to the Unmentionable, 'Hide the head of the bullock in the heap of corn and bury the skin in the chaff, and let no one know about it.' 144. The Unmentionable's mind becoming puffed with pride, he said, 'As soon as it is morning, I will go and tell the people about this.'

THE MAHAR BETRAYS BODHLA

145. While he was thus thinking, the sun arose and the malevolent Mahar went into the town at once and asked for bread from house to house. 146. He went into the *kunbis*' (farmers') houses, and sat by them. Then when they requested him to keep himself at a distance, and asked why he entered their houses, 147. he began to argue with them: 'What difference is there between you and me? The well-known Bodhla had a bullock killed beside the heap of corn yesterday. 148. You ate the beef, and why now keep me at a distance?' In the same way he went on repeating the same story from house to house. 149. There was then a whispering among the people that Bodhla had done a wrong thing. They said, 'He calls himself Hari's *bhakta* but he has ceremonially defiled his relatives.' 150. Some said, 'This is a false rumour.' Others said, 'It is quite true, for Bodhla's bull is not seen in the cowpen.' 151. His caste people and relatives then gath.

ered together and quietly thought the matter over saying, 'Let us go and ask Bodhla as to why he has polluted us.' 152. They then asked the Mahar to show them some evidence of what he had told them and he replied that he had hidden the head of the bull in the heap of corn, 153. and the skin in the chaff, and that he would show them the evidence if they would follow him. As they heard the malevolent Mahar all the men became very angry. 154. They said, 'Let us go and take Bodhla's life and if the king asks us about it we will pay the fine.' 155. Saying this the wicked people came and stood near Bodhla with sticks in their hands. 156. He had closed his eyes, was meditating at heart on the image of Shri Vitthal, and was all alone repeating God's name with love. 157. The people said, 'Open your eyes; we have come to kill you. What a rascal you are that you have openly polluted all of us.'

A MIRACLE IS PERFORMED AND THE MAHAR
PROVED FALSE

158. Bodhla said, 'O Lord of Pandhari, come to my help at this critical time. Apart from Thee, O merciful One, who is there to protect the lowly?' 159. On that the evil-minded said to him, 'The Husband of Rukmini will not come to your help now. You had a bull killed and you gave us its beef, and have thus practised pollution.' 160. Then turning to the Mahar they said, 'Bring your evidence and show us.' 'Surely,' he said and then went to look for it in the heap. 161. Now in the heap of corn there was the head of the bull, but the Lord of Pandhari had turned it into that of a goat. In the same way the skin was changed and all saw it as he drew it out. 162. As the Mahar took it in his hand, he bent his neck in shame. Said he, 'I killed a bull. This is indeed very strange.' 163. Then the villagers asked Bodhla, 'Where is your bull?' And the Lord

of Pandhari worked a wonder which no other can do. 164. The bull which had been butchered was brought back to life and the people wondered and exclaimed, 'The Mahar is a liar.' 165. Then the villagers addressed the Untouchable and said, 'We will kill *you*. You made a false allegation against Bodhla and made us persecute him.' 166. As the Mahar heard the angry talk of all he began to tremble all over and fell flat at the feet of Vishnu's *bhaktia*. 167. He said, 'I am most guilty. I am a low caste, very wicked and evil-minded. Now forgive me my fault and save my life.' 168. As he (Bodhla) heard the evil-minded thus speak, pity arose in his mind and he requested the villagers not to kill him. 169. Then the Mahar abandoned all pride and prostrated himself before Bodhla, for he was overcome with shame at heart that he had wronged all of them. 170. In the meantime the Husband of Rukmini said in a whisper to Bodhla, 'I had told you the secret and you have experienced the truth of it.' 171. Bodhla then said, 'O Life of the world, no one understands Thy utmost reach.' Saying this he clasped His feet and the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) smiled.

A GOOD CROP IN A FAMINE

172. You pious *bhaktas*, listen to another story about Bodhla with reverence. The inhabitants of Dhamangaon witnessed Bodhla's life in various ways. 173. They said, 'Bodhla is not a common man, he is really an *avatar* of God. He carries all safely through their earthly life.'

174. One year there was no rain at all. Therefore the sowing of seeds in Dhamangaon was not done for the first crops. 175. The absence of rain lasted until the month of *Ashvin* (October), then in the following month *Kartik* (November) there fell the rain of the *Svāiti* (the name of one of the twenty-seven lunar changes) in abundance. 176. Bodhla borrowed money and bought seed, and the villagers

went to work as labourers. 177. Crowds of pilgrims with banners in their hands were going to Pandharpur. Seeing them Bodhla was pleased at heart. 178. With devotion he prostrated himself before the pilgrims and said, 'My Fate is favourable and therefore I see the saints.' 179. Among them were some Brahmans. They said to Bodhla, 'We hear that in famine time you give grain to the poor and therefore we have come here.' 180. Hearing what the Brahmans said he thought to himself, 'There is no grain in my house. If the saints and good people go away empty-handed my reputation will surely suffer.' 181. Then he called his son aside and told him to bring seed home and give the saints a dinner: 182. 'If seed is sown in the lifeless earth it yields crops; then what of saints who have life? If seed is sown in their stomachs, what will it not yield?' 183. Yamaji was greatly delighted at hearing his father's words and the labourers who had gone to work in the field were sent back into the town. 184. 'The seed was a maund and a quarter; this was ground and the pilgrims were fed. Seed of bitter pumpkin had been sown in his field, 185. and God's miracle is wonderful, for it now yielded many pumpkins. The villagers laughed and said, 'This is very strange. 186. Why did he feed the pilgrims with seed? And why did he sow the bitter pumpkin?' In the meantime a reviler came there; hear what he said: 187. 'Bodhla the *Patil* is our king and we are his subjects. He thinks that we should give up all sense of public shame, 188. therefore he is going to give every one of us a pumpkin to use as a begging bowl and therefore he has sown them here.' All laughed at what the bad man said. 189. Then all of them replied, 'Let us go to the field of Bodhla, and see the wonder. Let us all see what sort of a nice crop he has.' Saying this they all got up. 190. When they went into the field they saw innumerable pumpkins and they broke one of them

open. 191. There they saw a wonderful sight, for the pumpkins yielded wheat. Then they said, 'God's miraculous deeds are unfathomable.' And the hearts of all were filled with wonder.

BODHLA ARRESTED

192. There was a *Havaldar* (village officer) present who said, 'This must be reported to the king.' He then wrote a detailed report to the Muhammadan king. 193. On reading the report the king said, 'Some magic has been practised.' Then he sent five armed soldiers to Dhamangaon. 194. They arrested Bodhla and took him to the royal court. When the king asked him about it he gave a detailed account. 195. The king grew angry and asked, 'How did wheat come into the pumpkin?' Bodhla said, 'I do not know. It is the doing of the Dweller at Pandhari.' 196. The king heard what God's *bhakt* said but he could not believe it, just as when hearing the life of Shri Ramchandra the evil spirits burn inwardly; 197. and as when Sanjaya read the *Bhagavadgita* to King Dhritarashtra he had no faith in it; just so the Muhammadan king could not believe the words of Bodhla. 198. The king flew into a rage and said, 'Make Mankoji Bodhla a Muhammadan.' At once a dish of cooked flesh was brought, 199. and Bodhla was compelled to eat it. Suddenly the flesh turned to flowers and *tulsi*, and the king at once got up and bowed to Bodhla.

MANKOJI BODHLA'S TRUE BHAKTI

200. The king said, 'Ask for as much wealth as your mind may desire.' At this Bodhla's mind was disgusted and he at once walked off. 201. To the king he said, 'I have no wish in my heart. When there is the wish-cow in one's house, why should he go begging from house to house? 202. When there is the wish-tree in one's yard, why should he plant trees of *sindi*? It is unseemly to

ride a donkey when one can afford to get the elephant of the god Indra. 203. Why should one abandon the shade of a mango tree and go and sit under a *hivar* tree? Why should one be tired of a human body and wish for that of a beast? 204. Why should one abandon the *bakul* tree and the *shevanti* and accept a *pungal* creeper (a stinking plant)? Why should one leave the company of saints and love revilers? 205. Why should one give up the praises of Hari and go to hear an obscene song? When there is abundance of curds and of milk in one's house, why should he go in search of sour milk? 206. Those who have attained the higher order of a *Paramhansa* (a class of ascetic), they will never return to the state of a householder. In the same way, when one has a deep love for the worship of Shri Rama, he will never accept a royal honour.' 207. Saying this he returned to Dhamangaon. He had in him a deep love for God and he was not proud. 208. When a *bhakta* is devoted to the name and form of God, then the *bhakta* forgets he is a *bhakta*. So also the Husband of Rukmini forgets His own divinity. 209. If a gold crown and an anklet are melted in a crucible then both lose their names. 210. In the same way while Bodhla sang the praises of Pandurang he forgot himself. Then thinking of the Life of the world in his heart he sang the praises of non-duality. 211. By dint of his good devotion, he changed Dhamangaon into Pandhari; and in various ways he brought his life to the notice of the people and by his love saved the dull and the ignorant.

212. In the next chapter there is the wonderful story of the loving *bhakta*, Ganeshnath. His life is very sweet. May the loving *bhaktas* listen to it with love.

213. The Merciful to the lowly, the Husband of Rukmini, through His grace causes me to explain the

right meaning of this book. I Mahipati am His suppliant and sing His praises with love.

214. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. The Lord of the world will be pleased to listen to it. O ye pious and loving *bhaktas*, listen to it. This is the fifty-fourth interesting chapter; it is an offering to Shri Krishna.

CHAPTER LV

GANESHNATH

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Lord of the world.

INVOCATION

1. Victory, victory to Thee, the Imperishable, the Indestructible, the One without name and form, the supreme Being, the Lord of the Universe, the Pervader of the world, the Lord of his joy, O Shri Hari ! 2. Thy *bhaktas* think of Thee; their meditation is on Thee, just as the *chatak* bird and the cloud live as friends. 3. A child longs for its mother, for the mother has love for her child; so the Husband of Rukmini follows the inclination of His *bhaktas*. 4. The ocean at the sight of the glorious moonlight on the full moon day is delighted. In the same way, O Life of the world, Thou takest delight in listening to the fame of Thy *bhaktas*. 5. Thy *bhaktas* praise Thee and Thou art also fond of their reputation. Therefore Thou hast caused me to write their lives in this book, the *Bhaktavijaya*.

GANESHNATH'S CHARACTER

6. In the previous chapter it is related that Bodhraj gave evidence to the Muhammadan king and then discarding all earthly riches, lovingly gave himself up to the worship of Hari. 7. Now listen to the wonderful life of Ganeshnath, ye pious *bhaktas* of God. He was knowing, thoughtful, very indifferent to worldly things, and a true worshipper of his spiritual *Sadguru*. 8. In the province of Baleghat there are two towns, Sarase and Ujjani. He lived there and performed *kirtans* with love. 9. He wore with love a riband around his neck, wooden earrings in his ears, a piece of cloth as a clout, and was content. He wished for nothing that would disturb his mind. 10. In the daytime he lived in the forest all alone, singing the

praises of Shri Hari, and coming back into the town at night sang of the deeds of God. 11. He did not care about receiving any honour, nor did he like the earthly way of worship, the hypocritical singing of the praises of God, fine clothes or riches, or dainty foods.

KING SHIVAJI VISITS GANESHNATH

12. Once on a time King Shivaji went on a pilgrimage to Pandharpur and hearing of Ganeshnath's reputation he went to visit him. 13. Falling prostrate before him he sat listening to his *kirtan*. Ganeshnath's knowledge was extensive and his poetry inspiring. 14. Using many illustrations he composed *abhangs* like arrows (which pierced the heart of the listeners), and made the ears of his audience very happy. 15. He (King Shivaji) had a new bedstead made for him and he longed to request Ganeshnath to sleep on it the very first day.

16. With hands joined palm to palm he said, ' O *Swami*, kindly spend a night in my camp. I have a new bedstead made for you.' Saying this he fell at his feet. 17. Seeing the respect paid him by Ganeshnath, the king was in a great difficulty, as when a tiger is about to carry away a doe, her heart trembles. 18. Knowing the difficulty, the ascetic said, ' Surely.' Then he collected small pebbles in the cavity of his hands and tied them in the end of his cloth. 19. Seeing those pebbles the king asked, ' Why have you picked up the pebbles ? ' The latter replied, ' To count the names (of God)'. 20. The king then seated him in a palanquin and took him to his camp. He prepared a bed of flowers and requested Ganeshnath to sleep on it. 21. *Vidas* (rolled betelnut leaves) with the thirteen ingredients were arranged on a plate. Lamps were lighted and hangings were let down on all sides. 22. The king left there many fragrant things and various means of enjoyment and fortune and then came out.

GANESHNATH'S DISLIKE OF EASE AND SENSUAL OBJECTS

23. At the sight of sensual objects he felt repentance in every limb; just as a worshipper of fire finds himself pent up in the house of a Muhammadan; 24. or as a tiger takes a living cow into his cave and she with a fearful heart tries to come out of it as soon as she can; 25. or as a deer brought from a forest and tied up in a palace wishes at heart to be able to get away quickly; 26. or as a living fish struggles in ghee; just so did Ganeshnath feel about the attractions in the royal palace. 27. As a parrot is put into a cage for the first time, and he does not like the food and drink given to it; in the same way the one who was indifferent to worldly things felt disgusted. 28. He had taken with him some pebbles and had spread them on the bedstead where he slept for four *ghatikas* (one *ghatika*=24 minutes), when the sun arose. 29. When the king came to visit him he saw the pebbles spread on the bedstead. He felt astonished at heart and prostrated himself before him. 30. With hands joined palm to palm, he asked Nath of this and he replied, 'Had I slept on the comfortable bedstead, the sleep would have been too sound; 31. therefore in order to satisfy your real aim for me, I spread the pebbles on it and slept; for if the body is permitted to enjoy itself it will have to experience a proportionate amount of grief in the future. 32. You go on scratching the itch and feel very pleased at the time, but when the scratching ceases there is no relief; 33. we take pleasure in eating, but feel it troublesome to vomit; in the same way the pleasure derived from sleep is very sweet in the beginning, but in the end it is harmful to the body. 34. *Buchanag* (poisonous *gloriosa superba*) is sweet to eat but the eater loses his life; in the same way, O king, there is great danger in the enjoyment of sensual

objects.' 35. As the king heard this advice he repented and vowed never again to sleep on a bedstead.

GANESHNATH AS A SPIRITUAL GURU

36. In accordance with his resolve the king gave away in charity the bedstead to a Brahman. Such is the glory of the company of saints that even Brahmadev and others do not know. 37. Ganeshnath's state of life was like this: He was completely ascetic in relation to the three states of human life [referring either to waking, dreaming and sound sleep; or to infancy, youth and age]. He did not live in the town but roamed about in a forest. 38. As he performed his *kirtans* in his own country many pious people came to listen. Every day he gave the mystic *mantra* to anyone who might wish it. 39. As the disciple felt his hand on his head, his inclination for the earthly life left him. He gave up all family affairs and wandered about from forest to forest. 40. If the disciple was a very bad man, a reviler, or a designing one, as soon as Ganeshnath touched his head the complete spirit of asceticism came to him. 41. In this way a year passed and he had three hundred and sixty disciples. They wore clouts (i. e., were celibates), were strictly ascetic, and had full spiritual knowledge. 42. The people of different towns discussed them differently. Some said, 'Those who receive his mystic *mantra*, their attachment to worldly affairs at once disappears, and they follow their *Sadguru*.' 43. Some said, 'He is a horrible sorcerer;' or, 'He practises witchcraft;' or 'He is a great adept in spiritual knowledge;' 44. or 'He is Pandurang Himself;' or 'He is an outright hypocrite;' or 'His company destroys the earthly life;' 45. or 'Let no one go to visit him;' or 'What is in one's Fate is sure to happen;' 46. or 'Let us see him and give him a piece of advice; he has spoiled the lives of many and has spread destruction in many families.'

47. Saying these things they went to visit Ganeshnath one day and saw him deeply engaged in meditation under the shade of a mango tree. 48. As he finished his mental worship Ganeshnath looked around to see if there was anyone who wished to be his disciple so that he could place his hand on his head.

A MANGO TREE GIVEN A MANTRA

49. Revilers came and stood there and said, 'You have made simpletons your disciples, and made them wander about after you. 50. You have destroyed the family life of many and hence the people are very displeased. Now we request you to do something and please do it accordingly. 51. You saints are endowed with spiritual knowledge. In your sight the four classes of creatures are alike. Therefore from to-day graciously bestow your mystic *mantra* on the vegetable kingdom. 52. 'By all means,' he replied and exhibited a wonderful visible manifestation, which in this world of mortals is not possible to others though using various means. 53. There was an old mango tree there and he gave his mystic saying (*mantra*) to it, and placed his hand upon it. 54. When he made it his disciple the people saw the wonder with their own eyes and said, 'When you give your mystic *mantra* to human beings they give up their worldly affairs. 55. How are we to know that the tree is influenced by your *mantra*? Therefore kindly perform some other miracle by which our doubt will be dispelled. 56. Someone had brought bread and vegetables to offer him. Ganeshnath picked some up and held them in his hand. 57. He thus addressed the tree which had received his *mantra*: 'This is God's favour, open your mouth and lovingly eat it.' 58. As the *Sadguru* uttered these words, a most wonderful sight occurred. The trunk of the tree split in two before all. 59. The bread was put into the

gap, and at that very moment it became just as before, at which all of them wondered, their minds becoming absorbed therein. 60. The wise and the revilers who were there prostrated themselves before Ganeshnath and said, 'There is no *bhakta* like you, so God-loving, so knowing and so pure. 61. Full of pride we troubled you for nothing. Saying this they went to their homes.

STONES CLAP HANDS

62. One day Ganeshnath was performing a *kirtan* in a forest and to listen to it there came the wise, the learned, the *bhaktas* of Vishnu and the thoughtful. 63. There were also men well versed in the *Vedas* and *Shastras*, and pious men of the eighteen castes had gathered there to experience the pleasure arising from the love of the *kirtan*. 64. Cymbals, *vinas* and drums were sounded. The sky re-echoed with the shouts of the names of God. 65. Ganeshnath put up his hands as if they were banners, to motion to the people to clap their hands. Hear what the wise and the learned said to him then: 66. 'You are a *Bharādī* (an order of *Gosavis*) and of a low caste. We Brahmans belong to the highest class. At your order we never will clap our hands.' 67. On this Ganeshnath replied, 'The palm tree is very tall but its shade is of no use to anyone. 68. You Brahmans are really the highest and most respectable amongst the eighteen classes, but your hands are not useful for clapping in a *kirtan*. 69. Now with a quiet heart just listen to the *kirtan*. By your favour, O masters, stones will clap hands.' 70. As he who had the ascetic spirit thus spoke, all witnessed a very wonderful sight. Suddenly there was an upheaval of the stones on the plain. 71. They fell on each other just like hands and created a clapping sound at which the people were wonder-struck. 72. They said, 'This wonder is quite new. How did he

cause the stones to be full of life ? Ganeshnath's devotion is without comparison. His *maya* (or power over illusions) will not be known even to Indra (king of the gods) or to others.' 73. Then with a repentant heart the Brahmans all clapped hands and with this Ganeshnath was satisfied. 74. By this time the sun was in the meridian. Auspicious lights were waved over the god. Sweetmeats were served to the audience and the people went home. 75. On their way home the people said among themselves, ' Out of pride we persecuted him in vain. ' In this way conversing with one another they praised Ganeshnath: 76. ' Ganeshnath is a loving *bhakta* of God.' He had a promise from the Lord of Pandhari and even until the present day there is a fair at Ujani and Sarase. 77. Saints, *mahants* and loving *Vaishnavas* go there and the place is still awake to the possibilities of wonders occurring there. Thus the Merciful to the lowly for ever increases the reputation of His *bhaktas*.

KESHAV SWAMI & THE SLEEPY GROCER'S BLUNDER

78. Now ye pious ones, listen to the life of Keshav Swami who was very pious and not at all touched by the mire of sensual objects. 79. Wandering at will about the country, he once went to Vijapur and on an *Ekadashi* day performed a *kirtan* in the public square. 80. Hearing the reputation of Keshav Swami, many people came to listen. Among them there were saints, *mahants*, many others who were indifferent to worldly things, Brahmans well versed in the *Vedas*, and the learned. 81. There were men and women of the eighteen castes, the inferior, the higher and the most ignorant castes, and the crowd was so thick that the bazaar was overflowing. 82. Torches were lighted and the din of the cymbals and drums was heard there, Keshav Swami dancing with a loving heart full of delight in the *kirtan*. 83. He had an old Brahman

as his disciple to whom he said, 'Today is a great *Ekadashi* day and all have observed a fast. 84. Therefore you go to the grocer's and buy some dry ginger and sugar. When the people are about to disperse, distribute the same amongst them as a favour.' 85. At this order the Brahman went quickly to the market to the grocer's shop, but the grocer was sleeping. 86. Shouting out to him the Brahman said, 'Give me ginger and sugar.' 'Very well,' said the grocer who got up. It was dark in the shop 87. and when he felt for the ginger, he came across a bag of *bachanag* (*gloriosa superba*, a poison) and gave the Brahman seven seers of it, for (on account of darkness) he could not make out *bachanag* from ginger. 88. The same amount of sugar was given and the grocer said to the Brahman, 'My son has gone to market (at some other place), therefore I cannot come to the *kirtan*. 89. There must be many men there and this ginger will not suffice.' Saying this he put in just as much more as his two hands could contain. 90. His action was like one who gives a blessing which turns to pride; or like bad words for prayer; or like putting around one's neck a great snake which is mistaken for a garland of flowers; 91. or like practising magic in the place of austerities; or like giving a patient a disease instead of medicine; or instead of clouds, letting fire devour a forest 92. without the forest knowing; the grocer acted in the same way. He gave poison instead of ginger. He was overpowered by the effects of sleep, so he did not know what he was doing. 93. The buyer also did not know it. He returned home and with a crusher he broke it into pieces.

KRISHNA AVERTS DISASTER BY TAKING POISON

94. Now this mishap happened without the knowledge of anyone. The Lord of Pandhari knew it,

however, and said, ' If the listeners eat it, a great disaster will take place. 95. They have already fasted on account of *Ekadashi* and if they eat *bachanag* they will die; and no one will listen to My *kirtan* in future. 96. No one will believe the words of my *bhaktas*, and the people will consider as false My past delightful fame.' 97. Saying this the Lord of Pandhari thought to himself, 'I must prevent such a disaster.' Then he swallowed up the whole of the poisonous *bachanag*, 98. and turned the poison to nectar. The Life of the World acts in a manner which gives happiness to His *bhaktas*, whereby their births and deaths are destroyed.

A GRATEFUL GROCER

99. To return to our story. The *bhakta* Keshav was dancing with loving delight in his *kirtan* and clapping his hands while singing of the deeds of Hari. 100. The *kirtan* went on through the four watches of the night, lights were waved over the Husband of Rukmini, and the sweetmeats of *bachanag* were distributed to all. 101. Some tied it as Hari's favour in the end of their cloth, but several ate it on the spot and then went home. 102. At sunrise the grocer got up in his shop, and suddenly he saw before him the sack of *bachanag*. 103. He said 'A great disaster has occurred. What shall I do? I sold *bachanag* for ginger. 104. Many loving saints, God's *bhaktas*, must have come to listen to the *kirtan* and must have died, and I am the cause of it. 105. If the thing is known in the town who will save me (from death)? And even after death I shall be thrown into a horrible hell. 106. Bad as I am, I am shut out from this world and the next. No sinner like myself will be found in all three worlds. 107. Among animals the donkey and the pig are the two kinds that are considered the lowest, but I am worse than these.' In this way the

grocer repented. 108. 'Then why should I now live? I must drown myself in a well.' With this determination he left his shop and started off. 109. As he enquired in the town he learned that none had died. He attentively listened but he found none weeping. 110. He asked the people whether they had gone to the *Hari-kirtan*, and if they had taken any of the sweetmeat favour. 111. They said, 'We had observed a fast on account of *Ekadashi*, so we ate the favour of ginger and sugar just there and came home.' 112. On that the grocer said to them, 'You had a fast yesterday, so you must be very hungry now, therefore dine at once.' 113. They replied, 'We observe religious rules. We are not as anxious for food as you are, for we hope to be able to fast yet for one more night.' 114. At this answer he went away and inquired of others indirectly. Then he went to the cemetery and looked about. 115. But he saw not a single dead body. At this the grocer very much wondered and said, 'The Lord of Pandhari has prevented a disaster and saved many from it.'

KRISHNA'S IMAGE BECOMES BLACK

116. After his bath Keshav Swami looked at the metal image of Krishna. It appeared black at which he was astonished; 117. just as in an eclipse the moon loses its brightness, in the same way the Husband of Rukmini looked dark. 118. Seeing this the *bhakta* Keshav wondered in his mind and said, 'The image was very bright. How has it become so intensely black today.' 119. Hearing his wonderful account of this, men and women rushed there to see it. In the meantime the grocer came there and addressed Keshav Swami: 120. 'As I was feeling for the sack of ginger in the dark at night I happened to go to the sack of *bachanag*. I measured seven seers of it and gave it to the man. 121. But that disaster

has been warded off by the Lord of Pandhari, and all the listeners have been saved. Now, O Swami, tell me how I should atone for it.' 122. Keshav Swami heard him and tears of joys streamed out of his eyes. His voice was choked, and he addressed God thus : 123. ' Victory, victory to Thee, O Mother Vitthal, Merciful to the lowly. Thou hast today averted a great calamity and preserved Thy reputation, by Thy favour protecting Thy servants. 124. The terrible poison of *bachanag* has affected Thee but Thou didst save the lives of many by Thyself becoming black. 125. By the taking of Thy name, the deadly poison which was given to Thy *bhakta* Pralhad changed to nectar. Then how could a bit of the poisonous *bachanag* harm Thee to-day ? 126. Thou art the highest and the God of gods. By singing Thy praises Shiva had his burning heat cooled. That the poison of *bachanag* should harm Thee today is a new thing, O Shri Vitthal. 127. Thou didst easily trample upon the serpent Kaliya (in the Yamuna river). His poison did not affect Thee; and that the poison of *bachanag* should turn Thee black is a wonder, O Shri Hari. 128. The demoness Putana with her breasts full of poison nursed Thee. Is *bachanag* deadlier than that poison, that Thou hast become dark ? 129. Has nectar suffered death today or has darkness swallowed the sun, or has the river Bhagirathi by its own sins become foul by the sins she has washed away ? 130. Or has the earth felt the burden of grass, or has the adamant (of Indra) feared a mountain and run away ? Or has the sky been covered by dust ? ' It is just like that. 131. Can one imagine the round moon to feel the heat, or the ocean of milk to feel hungry, or the Husband of Parvati to be harmed by devils ? 132. Or can one imagine that Kubera (the god of wealth) could be poverty-stricken, or the word of Brahmadeva be false, or the sky lose its bright-

ness ? 133. O Govinda, all the foregoing impossible things may be possible but Thou canst not be harmed, for in order to increase the reputation of Thy servants Thou dost reveal Thy *sagun* form. 134. Thou art without birth and unconquered, O Lord of Pandhari. Thou art the Controller even of *Kali* (the Dark Age) and *Kal* (god of death). O Lord of the helpless, kindly be bright again as before.' 135. Hearing this praise, the Husband of Rukmini was pleased and the metal image looked bright again. 136. As the people saw this miracle with their own eyes they very much wondered and said, 'In the *Kali Yuga* there is no better means of salvation than the *kirtan*.' 137. The grocer greatly repented and gave up all his worldly affairs, and in the company of Keshav Nath he listened to the stories of Hari.

GOMAI THE BRAHMAN WIDOW

138. May the listeners attend to the delightful story of Gomaiawa, a Brahman widow who started for Pandharpur. 139. She was very weak and very poor. She did not get sufficient food to eat. She wore worn-out clothes and begged for grain from house to house. 140. She soon reached Gulsare, where the river Chandrabhaga was in flood. She felt anxious at heart and said, 'Who will take me to the other side ?' 141. On the bright 10th of *Ashadh* (July) the pilgrims fasted. Gomai said to the boatman, 'Please take me to the other bank.' 142. There was a very large number of pilgrims and rich persons paid money to the boatmen and sat in the ferry boat. 143. As Gomai went near the boat she was pushed back into the water. Her clothes became wet and she came out weeping. 144. She wept loudly, saying, 'Who will take me to the other side now ?' The boatmen said, 'You old hag, pay us money and we will take you to the other side.' 145. Gomai said in reply, 'I will give you a handful of flour instead. Accept it quickly and take me to the other side of the

Bhivara (Bhima) river. 146. I cannot pay you in money.' In this way she pleaded in various ways with the boatmen but they had no compassion for her. The men at sacred places are hard-hearted and evil-minded. 147. All the pilgrims got to the other side but Gomai remained on this side. She did not know what to do. Then she began to weep sitting alone. 148. Said she, ' I shall not see the Husband of Rukmini. In vain did I come so far. The men at sacred places are very wicked. Their hearts will never melt. '

KRISHNA HELPS AS A BRAHMAN

149. Seeing her state, the Lord of Pandhari became a boatman and went to her quickly. He the Helper of the lowly, had a raft of pumpkins. 150. Shri Hari went near Gomai and said to her, ' Old lady, if you want to go to the other side of the river, get up quickly. ' 151. She said, ' *Bapa* (father), I am poor, I have no money to pay you. So if you accept a handful of flour and take me to the other side I will come. ' 152. On this the Recliner on the serpent Shesha said, ' I do not take anything from anyone. I take the wretched to the other side. 153. Just for this reason, I have been staying a long time in Pandharpur. ' As he said this, Gomai was very pleased at heart. 154. She said, ' O boatman, hear what I say. The night has advanced three hours. I have no other clothes to wear. ' 155. On this the Lord of Pandhari said, ' I will not let anything of yours get wet, not even your hands and feet. I will take you on my shoulders, and take you to the other side. ' 156. Saying this, the Merciful to the lowly lifted up Gomai and in a moment's time took her to the other side of the river. 157. Gomai asked the boatman, ' How is it that your body has not got wet ? It is indeed very wonderful that you brought me to the other bank of the river (without getting wet yourself) ! ' 158. On this

Chakrapani (Krishna) said, 'I am not an ignorant boatman. I take my *bhaktas* quite dry to the other side of the ocean of worldly affairs.' 159. Gomai then said, 'You have laid me under an obligation; therefore take this handful of flour and tie it in your cloth.' 160. God replied, 'I do not take anything from anyone. Make cakes of it on the twelfth day and give them to the Brahman.' 161. Saying this the Life of the world disappeared in a moment and the old woman went to the main door of the temple and had a vision of God.

KRISHNA AND RUKMINI DINE WITH GOMAI

162. On the *Ekadashi* day she listened to the *kirtan*, bathed in the Chandrabhaga, and sat on the sandy bed with the flour tied in a cloth. 163. She said, 'Today is a festival, the twelfth day of the fortnight. I should like to give dry provisions of food to a Brahman, but I have no pulse or salt. 164. If I see a Brahman, I shall speak humbly to him and say, "Kindly accept this handful of flour."' 165. But no Brahman came near her. Every one said, 'Right at the beginning I had the ominous sight of this widow, so now there is no possibility of obtaining a patron in her. 166. For who is going to accept only flour without coarse sugar, rice and ghee?' Saying this to himself, no Brahman came near her. 167. Gomai said, 'O Lord of Pandhari, what shall I do now? If I am not able to feed a Brahman on the twelfth day I will not eat food.' 168. Seeing her firm devotion the Lord of Pandhari, the God of gods, as an old Brahman went to her. 169. He said to Gomai, 'Today is the festival of the twelfth day; I am a poor Brahman and have come to you. 170. If you have at least flour enough for one cake, give it to me with good devotion.' As Shri Hari thus spoke the old woman was greatly delighted at heart. 171. The noble Brahman moreover said, 'I have no place to lodge in. I stay in the temple

and I am very hungry. 172. If you bake the cakes for me here, I will eat them just here with delight.' As the Lord of Pandhari thus spoke Gomai was joyful at heart. 173. Then she collected some cowdung cakes, bathed and baked the cakes and Pandurang with great liking and love began quickly to eat. 174. Just then Mother Rukmini as an old woman appeared there and said, ' O *Chakrapani* (Krishna), you came here by yourself to dine without my knowledge. ' 175. Then the Brahman said to Gomai, ' Now feed the *suvasini* (a woman enjoying the happy state of wifehood). You are very lucky. Without any trouble you reap the benefit of dining a couple.' 176. There was flour enough for only two cakes but it increased in quantity and Rukmini and the Lord of Pandhari dined with Gomai. 177. Having taken a leaf of *tulsi* for cleansing the mouth, the Merciful to the lowly disappeared. Listen to another narrative which is most interesting, O loving and pious ones.

LATIBSHAH A MUHAMMADAN BHAKTA

178. Latibshah was a Muhammadan, a very pious *Vaishnava* who listened to the reading of the *Gita* and the *Bhagwat*, and sang the praises of Shri Rama day and night. 179. He gave up his own Muhammadan religion and took an intense liking for *kirtans*. With limitless love he performed his daily worship. 180. Then all the Muhammadans reported to the king that Latibshah worshipped Shri Rama day and night. 181. The Muhammadan king was very thoughtless and sent men to loot the cottage of Latibshah and utterly destroy it at once. 182. Immediately at the king's command all his officers went to the cottage but at the sight of him they all gained peace and happiness of heart. 183. They heartily repented and said, ' We will no more serve the king. We will stay just here, listen to the *Bhagavadgita*, and stay here for ever.' 184. The king was very much astonished at heart and said, ' No one has

come back. Therefore let me go in person to persecute him.' 185. Latibshah mentally understood that the king was coming to persecute him and he therefore took out the book of the *Bhagwat*, and sat reading it near the altar of the *tulsi* plant.

186. Latibshah was surrounded by loving and pious men who were listening to his reading with love. In the meantime the Muhammadan king hastened and sat down. 187. As he looked round he found the place scrupulously clean. Right in the middle was the *tulsi* altar and around it were many fragrant flowering bushes which filled the place with their perfume. 188. The walls were covered with mortar and were very smooth and pictures were beautifully drawn on them. On them were the pictures of the ten principal *avatars* of Vishnu. 189. There were also pictures of sacred rivers and towns, and *Kailas* (Shiva's heaven), and *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). The drawings were in fast colours. 190. The Muhammadan flew into a rage as he saw this lovely place. Then he commenced his persecution.

A MUHAMMADAN KING'S PENITENCE

191. The painter had drawn the pictures of Radhika and Krishna at Vrindavan. Radha had in her hand a *Vida* (rolled betelnut leaves) and she was in the act of putting it into the mouth of Krishna. 192. The king asked Latibshah angrily, 'Who are these two in the picture? Tell me quickly.' 193. Latibshah replied, 'They are Radhika and Krishna.' 'What is that in her hand?' the king asked him. 194. The Vishnu-*bhakta* told him that Radha was offering a *Vida* to Krishna. At this answer the Muhammadan was greatly enraged at heart. 195. Said he, 'If Radhika is offering a *Vida* to him, why does not your Krishna eat it?' At this question the loving *bhakta* got up. 196. He joined both his hands palm to palm and began

to plead with Krishna. 'O Thou, the Advocate of Thy *bhaktas* and Enchanter of the world, hear my humble request. 197. With *Vida* in her hand here is Radhika standing devotedly, then O *Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the heart) please take it into Thy mouth.' 198. The God of gods was pleased by the loving devotion of His *bhakta* and through His *maya* worked a great wonder. 199. The picture of Krishna drawn on the wall opened its mouth at once and Radhika at the same time put the *Vida* into its month. 200. The evidence left there was that the green colour of the *Vida* which was noticed in Radhika's hand suddenly faded away. 201. As the king witnessed this marvel he bowed to Latibshah and said, 'Blessed is your pure worship, I vexed you for nothing.' 202. Saying this the king returned to his palace. Through pride of His *bhakta*, Shripati assumed a form. 203. The lotus-eyed One has *bhaktas* without end. His stories are without end. His *avatars* are without end. Mahipati is His suppliant and sings of His deeds.

204. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktivijaya*. In listening to it the Lord of the world will be pleased. May the pious and loving *bhaktas* listen to it with love. This is the fifty-fifth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER LVI
SANTOBA POWAR : NILOBA : UDDHAVA
CHIDGHAN

*Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the
Lord of the lowly.*

GOD'S LOVE

1. Victory to Thee, the Inhabitant of *Vaikunth*, the Attractor of the mind, the Husband of the Daughter of the Ocean (*Lakshmi*), the Imperishable, the Wish-tree, the best being, O *Pandurang*. 2. O *Krishna*, *Vishnu*, and the Supporter of all beings, the Mine of mercy, O God of gods, Thou art the only Treasure of one's happiness. 3. Thou art the Help of the helpless and generous to the unlucky. When the evil-minded persecute Thy *bhaktas*, Thou comest in person to advocate their cause. 4. Thou art the Friend of the friendless, Thou dost follow those who are free from desires. Thou givest an uninterrupted love for Thy worship and destroyest the earthly ties of thy servant. 5. Thou art the Lord of the helpless and the honoured Guest of the lowly. Thou dost grant assurance to the helpless. O Life of the world, I am dull of intellect, therefore help me to compose the book.

6. At the conclusion of the preceding chapter, as the king began to persecute *Latibshah*, the pictures on the walls became endowed with life on account of the loving devotion (of *Latibshah*).

SANTOBA POWAR'S RENUNCIATION

7. Now listen with respect to the story of *Santoba Powar* who was the noblest of the *Vaishnavas* and the great pillar of ascetics. 8. At his house there were horses, elephants, and fortune. He was honoured by

the king. As he once listened to the *kirtan* of Tukaram, repentance arose in his heart. 9. Said he, 'The worldly life is unsubstantial and illusory. The human body is perishable. Then why should I waste my life for nothing?' 10. Under his command there was an army which he sent for, paid off and dismissed. 11. Then he sent for the Brahmans and had them take away all his fortune and distributed among them his horses, elephants and chariots. 12. He put on a scanty and torn cloth, and being free from hindrances he gave himself up to the repetition of God's names. 13. He was the inhabitant of Ranjangaon Sandas and as soon as the ascetic spirit was established in him, he danced in the *kirtan* without any sense of shame. 14. He sat on an island, in a wood situated at the junction of the Mula, Mutha, and Bhimarathi; just as a parrot as soon as it is free from a cage flies away and sits in a tree; 15. or as a bee falls into temptation (for honey) and is shut up in a lotus-flower, but after a time it makes a determined effort and comes out full of repentance for having yielded; 16. or like an old serpent which after leaving its skin looks bright again; in the same way did Santoba feel as he gave up all attachment to his worldly life.

17. This news became known in the town. The people wondered and his mother wept out of affection and exclaimed, 'How unfortunate! 18. My son dismissed his army, and distributed his fortune, and has now become unconscious of his body! Our ancestral reputation will suffer and the evil-minded will laugh at us.' 19. She then put ornaments on her daughter-in-law and seating her in a palanquin said, 'When he sees his young wife he will return to his domestic life. 20. In the temple of Shiva on the island, Santaji sat alone in meditation when his wife suddenly appeared there in a palanquin. 21. He opened

his eyes and asked her, ' Why have you come here ? Go back at once without saying a word. ' 22. The wife answered, ' I cannot be separated far from you. If the water animals leave the ocean they have no other course. 23. It is useless to try and separate the bark from the tree, or the splendour from gold. 24. In the same way if one leaves his faithful wife what course on earth is open to her ? ' As Santoba heard his wife he said, 25. ' You see that my condition is one of being indifferent to all worldly things. You have many garments and ornaments and therefore I feel ashamed to call you my wife. 26. If you like to harden your heart against them, then give away your garments and jewellery to the beggars; or get up at once, and go straight home. '

SANTOBA'S REPENTANT WIFE

27. As the wife listened to her husband she repented of the way she was living and cast away her garments and jewellery. 28. The beautiful garments which she had on her she threw away on the trees. By this action of hers the goddess of rags was pleased. 29. Santaji had a *dhotar* (a male's garment) and half of it he gave to her. Now both of them were indifferent to worldly things and sat there meditating God. 30. He now felt so hungry that he was overcome by hunger. Then he said to his wife, ' Go into the town to beg for food. 31. In Pargaon of Salomalo we have many relatives, but now give up all sense of shame, and go there at once. 32. If the people address you kindly, do not say anything in reply. If anyone gives you a whole loaf do not accept it. ' 33. ' Of course, my lord, ' replied the faithful wife who started to go. Giving up all sense of public shame and affection she entered the town of Pargaon. 34. As she begged from door to door the men and women said, ' Asceticism has become fixed in you on account of your good deeds in

your former births.' 35. As she went from one house to another she uttered the words, 'Hari Vitthal.' If alms were not given her immediately she went onward at once.

36. On one occasion she went to the house of her sister-in-law and shouted the words 'Hari Vitthal' at the door. 37. Santaji's sister lived there and she came running out. Putting her hands around her neck she said affectionately, 38. 'Sister, you are very refined and very beautiful. I do not understand why God is angry with you so suddenly? 39. You were in the habit of sitting in a palanquin; the pebbles must now be paining your feet as you walk. You have cast away bright ornaments and have accepted indifference to worldly things. 40. Leaving aside gold-bordered garments you are now wearing tatters. You have given up eating the dainty foods of your house and go begging dry food.' 41. Then she brought out two cakes mixed with coarse sugar and ghee and insistently put them into her bag at once. 42. Seeing the food Santaji's wife said, 'Why do you give so much food? If the Lord of my life knows it he will be angry with me.' 43. The sister with a choked voice said, 'My dear, I give this out of affection. So go to your cottage and both of you eat it.' 44. Because she bound her by an oath her brother's wife returned. Coming to the island (she) requested her husband, 'Now dine, my lord.' 45. She laid before him the bag which contained the food obtained by begging. He could see there all the cakes. 46. When he who was ascetic in spirit saw this he enquired of his wife the reason of so much food and she explained everything to him. 47. With repentance he said to his wife, 'Go back to Pargaon and return the food to whom it belongs. 48. If you do not obey me, I will never dine.' Seeing her husband's resolve she returned there, 49. and related to her sister-in-law what had happened. As soon as she

reached the Bhivra river, the sun had set and darkness had filled the sky.

SANTOBA'S REFUSAL OF ALL FOOD

50. At the source of the river it had rained very heavily and the river was suddenly in flood. She was anxious at heart and did not know what to do. 51. 'The one who is my God, or *Guru*, or husband, is far away on the other side of the river. I have lost my family life. Fate is, indeed, insurmountable and mighty. 52. If one has not good deeds in her store she is not able to serve her husband. Now, O Keshav, rush to my help, and favour me.' In this way she pleaded with God. 53. The Lord of Pandhari seeing her trouble, rushed there at once and the Lord of the lowly as a boatman addressed her thus: 54. 'You are sitting here in anxiety, while on the other side is Santoba Powar. If you want to go there, I will take you across the river.' 55. Santoba's wife said to the boatman, 'Consider me as your sister and take me at once to the other side of the river.' 56. As she said this, Shri Hari seated her on His shoulders and in the twinkling of an eye took her across. 57. From a distance the Lord of Pandhari pointed out Santoba to her and the Husband of Rukmini disappeared just there. 58. When she went to her husband she related everything to him and He said, 'You met with the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). Why is He then trying me to the uttermost? 59. If I do not see Shri Hari I have resolved not to eat food, O my wife.' 60. Now in Pargaon there was a grocer who was a pious *bhakta* of God and the Lord of Pandhari gave him an order the next day in his dream as follows. 61. 'Cook dainty foods in your house and feed Santoba. Because you possess good deeds I have shown Myself to you.' 62. As the grocer saw this wonderful dream he at once got up and had dainty dishes prepared in his house, and he

took them to Santoba. 63. Telling him everything that had happened he said, 'The Lord of Pandhari has commanded, so therefore please dine.' Saying this he fell at his feet, 64. The *bhakta* Santoba then said, 'You saw the Husband of Rukmini. What sins do I possess that He is trying me to the uttermost?' 65. For until I have a sight of Shri Hari I will never eat food.' Seeing this was his resolve the grocer went away. 66. They say that in the *Kali Yuga* life depends upon food but Santoba's resolve was very strange. Knowing his heart the Husband of Rukmini gave him a *direct* manifestation.

A VEXATIOUS BRAHMAN HUSBAND OF RANJANGAON

67. After this, Santoba every day went to Ranjangaon to beg. Here there lived an impious Brahman who was always cross with his wife. 68. He was most provoking and quarrelled with his wife constantly. If the wife said anything to oppose him he frightened her by saying, 69. 'I shall become a *Bairagi* (an ascetic) like Santoba Powar, and when I give up my family affairs you will be in a sad plight.' 70. He said this boastfully and then his wife remained silent; just as an acrobat flourishes a weapon without bodily braveness; 71. or as a barren woman describes her longings without being pregnant; or as the shadow and roar of the clouds in the sky are in vain without rain; 72. or just as eunuchs assume artificial breasts; or just as an actor acts as a king without an umbrella and a throne; 73. in the same manner, those who talk about asceticism and peace, without possessing those, belong neither to the family life nor to the spiritual life. 74. That Brahman was always frightening his wife, so the poor thing felt anxious and kept silent. 75. One day the *bhakta* Santoba came to her house to beg and she related to him in detail everything about her husband. 76. 'O Swami, my husband says that he will become crazy like you.

If you will give me some suggestion I will follow it out. ' 77. The Vishnu *bhakta* replied to her, ' If after this he quarrels with you, let him act as he pleases and send him to me. 78. I will give him a piece of advice and send him back to you. Afterwards he will become as manageable as a monkey which is taken from house to house by its *dare-sh* (monkeyman). ' 79. ' Very well, ' said the Brahman woman as she bowed to him. Santoba accepted the alms and returned to his Ashram. 80. In a moment's time her husband returned home and said, ' Why are you late in cooking ? I am very hungry. 81. I will give up my family life and become like Santoba and go wherever I like. ' When he began to quarrel in this way, 82. the wife replied, ' Then why do you delay ? Become like him at once. '

SANTOBA'S *MANTRA* FOR AN IRRITABLE HUSBAND

83. Hearing his wife's reply the Brahman began to think, ' Why should I now live ? ' and he flew into a rage. 84. He then took his clothes and a pot and at once went on to the island and said to Santoba, ' I have given up my family life and have come to you. 85. Now I am like you, to be sure. I will never give up your company. Now favour me (with your mystic *mantra*) and show me the way to spiritual riches. ' 86. The Vishnu-*bhakta* said, ' Surely I am fortunate to have your company without any effort. I do not see any ascetic so indifferent to worldly things as you are in the three worlds. 87. Now take this gourd and fetch me water. Leave your turban and other clothes here, for there are thieves on the watch. ' 88. ' Very well, ' said the Brahman who at once went to the bank of the river, feeling very much troubled by hunger. 89. As soon as he had turned his back, Santoba tore to pieces the clothes the Brahman had been wearing and threw them on the bushes; he also hurled the man's pot into

the deep part of the river. Then the Brahman returned. 90. Santoba said to him, 'Wear a string and a clout around your loins.' So the Brahman with a sense of shame put away his *dhotar*. 91. Then he wore a clout and said to the *bhakta* of Vishnu, 'I feel so hungry. My life is in my throat.' 92. He plucked some wild fruits and began to eat with his wife. The Brahman said, 'This is very bitter. I don't like it.' 93. Santoba said in answer, 'As you have come to me so willingly, why should you care so much how things taste? 94. Well, I will give you something cool and will satisfy your hunger.' As he heard this reply of Santoba he was very much comforted. 95. Then he plucked some leaves of the bitter nimb and began to eat. The Brahman said to himself, 'My fate is not favourable to me. 96. I was quite happy in my house, even when eating coarse food. But I had a foolish idea and I left my home.' 97. He wept silently and said, 'What plan shall I now adopt? I feel the cold intensely, and am worn out with hunger.'

THE REPENTANT HUSBAND RETURNS TO HIS WIFE

98. Santoba could see the condition of his heart and so he asked him, 'Why were you regardless of your home and why have you come here?' 99. The Brahman replied, 'My fortune has taken an evil turn. I quarrelled with my wife for nothing. Thereby I felt sad at heart and came to you. 100. But your company is very hard. You tore away my clothes. Now if I intend to go home, shame overcomes me. 101. If I go at night, my wife will not let me in. She will say, "Who is this *gosavi* (a mendicant) in a clout?"' 102. The Vishnu-*bhakta* answered, 'You always said to your wife, "I will become indifferent to worldly things like Santoba and go into a forest." 103. Now vow by God that from to-day you will not say so again. Then I will take you to your house without anyone's

knowledge.' 104. The Brahman at once clasped Santoba's feet and said, 'If I quarrel again with my wife, may my tongue wither. I say this with God as my Witness.' 105. At night the *bhakta* Santoba went to the Brahman's house and said to the latter's wife privately, 106. 'I have given your husband my *mantra* (advice) and now I consign him to your care. I will send him presently, therefore do not quarrel with him now. 107. He will come here in a clout, therefore you give him a new cloth to wear.' Hearing this her heart was comforted. 108. Having advised the man's wife in that way he returned and told the Brahman to go safely home. 109. 'Mind, if you again quarrel with your wife, you will not find so harsh a person as myself to deal with.' The man placed his head at Santoba's feet and started homeward at once. 110. For fear of being seen he entered the town at night in the dark. Said he, 'If the Brahmans see me, they will excommunicate me.' 111. Therefore he entered his house quickly and tremblingly, and from that time he never again quarrelled with his wife.

SANTOBA AS A PANDHARPUR PILGRIM

112. After this event Santoba started for Pandhari as a pilgrim in the month of *Ashadh* (July). He was as delighted as a girl is when she visits her mother's home. 113. In the same way the *Vaishnava bhakta* went on singing and dancing full of love and two thousand pilgrims joined him on the way. 114. On the tenth bright (night) of *Ashadh* the *Warkari* (pilgrims) arrived at Narsinhapura where there is the junction of the Nira and Bhivra (Bhima). 115. It was the month of *Ashadh*, the rainy season, and the river was in high flood, its bed overflowing with water. Seeing this all became anxious. 116. They said, 'If we are not able to cross the river to-day we shall not be able to reach Pandharpur tomorrow. It seems the Husband of

Rukmini will not let us have the vision of him on the *Ekadashi* day.' 117. While they were talking in this way they reached the bank of the river and said, 'If there were at least one boat, we would all go over to the other bank of the river.' 118. At this the *bhakta* Santoba thought to himself, 'If we care for our body how shall we be able to see Bhagwant (God)?' 119. Therefore, having decided in his heart that Shri Hari (God) is both the Saviour and also the Killer, he went into the water at once and walked on. 120. A Vishnu-*bhakta* is devoted and loving and water cannot drown him. The water reached to his calves only. 121. Santoba took his *Vina* in his hand and began to sing the praises of God and he was able to cross the river at once. 122. When the other pilgrims saw this wonder they began to say, 'How are you going alone to the other side of the river and leaving us all here?' 123. Believing you to be the image of God Himself we came in your company. But fate destines it otherwise, for we have not the good fortune (to go to the other side). 124. We had heard of your incomparable reputation and thus intended to go to Pandharpur in your company. Now we will all go back.' 125. Hearing the pilgrims' statement he stood in the water and put up his hands. Listen to what he said! 126. 'O men and women of all castes, even the quadrupeds, the great and the small, do not ponder, but follow me at once. 127. Entertain no fear at heart, for the Lord of Pandhari will save you.' At this assurance all were comforted. 128. They said to one another, 'Because Santoba is going to Pandhari he found the water knee deep only. Let us follow him.' 129. They put their loads on their horses and all the pilgrims got up in a moment and went one after the other until they reached the river. 130. Seeing this the Lord of Pandhari thought to Himself, 'The river is in flood and all will be drowned. 131. Santoba repeats My names, therefore he could get across, but all are not

like him. They will not float like wood but will sink like stones. 132. If I do not rush to their help My *bhakta's* promise will be falsified. And if the pilgrims are drowned who will come to visit Me? 133. The wise will then consider the words of past saints as false.' Hear what the Life of the world did after saying this !

GOD AS A TORTOISE CARRIES PILGRIMS
ACROSS A RIVER

134. The God of gods, by Whose help all beings in the universe live, became a tortoise in order to take all the pilgrims on His back over to the other bank. 135. The bed of the river was very wide, therefore the Husband of Rukmini became as large as that. The Lord of the world evades the disasters of His *bhaktas* in various ways. 136. The Lord of the world is revered by Brahmadev and others and Shiva contemplates Him at heart. He carried the pilgrims on His back. This to me is most wonderful. 137. Well, all the men and women, the small and the great of all the eighteen castes, loudly shouted the names of God and walked all together. 138. The *Vaishnava bhaktas* loaded their horses and bullocks and shouted loudly the names of God and went into the water. 139. They found the water only knee deep, at which all wondered and said, 'We were detained for nothing.' 140. Some clapped their hands saying, 'Blessed is the company of saints. Then with peaceful hearts they arrived on the other bank of the river. 141. But they did not know that it was God Himself who had saved them in the form of a tortoise. By the wonderful *maya* (of God) all beings are enveloped in an illusion of ignorance.

142. Then the *Vaishnava bhakta* with the other pilgrims reached Pandharpur, bathed in the Chandrabhaga river, and performed a *kirtan* with love. 143. All went to the main door, prostrated themselves before God and embraced Him,

and with sincere devotion bowed to His feet. 144. Santoba said, 'O Shri Hari, Thou dost protect Thy *bhak* as in various ways. In praising Thee the tongue of the serpent Shesha became weary. 145. O God, Thou didst take the form of a tortoise and didst save the ignorant on Thy back. Now give me a refuge at Thy feet.' In this way Santoba pleaded with God. 146. At this the Merciful to the lowly smiled and said, 'You are My loving *bhakta*. Remain with me for ever.'

NILOBA AND HIS DAUGHTER'S WEDDING

147. There is another very interesting story. May the fortunate listeners pay attention to it with reverence. 148. O pious ones, listen to the sweet life of him (Niloba) to whom Tukaram, bestowing a great favour, gave the mystic *mantra* in a dream. 149. Niloba did not know what public honour and hypocrisy were. He performed the *kirtan* of Hari with devotion. He used to describe the lives of saints by quoting the words of the ancient saints. 150. He had children and other relatives. Even then he was far away from egoism. He accepted what was given him without begging, and with what he received he was hospitable to guests who came to him. 151. One day he planned the wedding of his daughter. His relatives were impious and hypocrites, and at his house there were no provisions of food, and so forth. 152. His wife said to him, 'You are indifferent to worldly things. In the end the evil-minded will make fun of us; so I think.' 153. The Life of the world knew this and assuming the form of a old Brahman he wore a torn cloth and came to their house. 154. He had a scarf on his shoulder at the end of which some small provisions of food were tied. In this way he went to Niloba and said, 155. 'I am a poor and weak Brahman. I have some provisions of food on me. Take them and give me a dinner.' 156. Niloba

bowed to the Brahman and said, 'Your provisions are not needed. Now at dinner-time make an offering of food to God and dine just here.' 157. On this Shri Hari said, 'I long to eat a stuffed cake, for I like sweet food. Therefore get the cooking ready at once and give me a meal to my heart's content.' 158. Niloba told his wife, 'Keep aside the provisions of the Brahman. Cook the food at once and feed the Brahman.' 159. 'By all means,' she said and took the provisions in her garment. She added, 'These provisions are too scanty; then how will you get full satisfaction?' 160. On this the Husband of Rukmini said, 'You put this in the provisions of the wedding, and take your own provisions and quickly satisfy my hunger. 161. If you do not accept my provisions I will not dine at all.' On this the loving *bhakta* said to his wife, 162 'What difficulty can there be in feeding one Brahman? Now quickly do the cooking and satisfy the Brahman.' 163. Then the Husband of Rukmini said, 'Cooking will take a long time. Therefore I will eat with love just what is ready.' 164. Then the Pervader of the world dined with His *bhakta* and at night while He was sitting quietly He said to Niloba Bowa, 165. 'Tomorrow is the wedding of your daughter. In your house there is no Brahman to fetch water, therefore if you keep Me (to do the work) I shall be able to prepare dainty foods. 166. Just for the love of God, I will fetch water.' 'Very well,' said Niloba who fell at His feet. 167. The next morning *Vanamali* (Krishna) got up quickly and without the knowledge of anyone performed the sweeping, also sprinkling the ground with water. 168. In the meantime the father of the bridegroom arrived with five hundred men as his wedding party. The bridegroom was honoured at the boundary of the town and then all his party went to lodge in a house assigned to them.

WHEN GOD PROVIDES NOTHING IS LACKING

169. Because the Life of the world was the Provider there was no lack of provisions. Who will have to remain fasting under the shade of a wish-tree? 170. If the sun comes as a guest to one's house there will be no lack of light. If the river Ganges itself sits in a pot of water there will be no lack of water. 171. If clouds themselves do the sprinkling of water how can there be a dry place left? If *Gajavadana* (Ganpati) gives a lesson how will the pupil remain dull? 172. The palmist cannot find any defects in the signs of one's personal beauty when the Creator Himself has created it? When Sarasvati (goddess of learning) does the writing herself what possibility of a mistake can there be? 173. In the same manner, since *Hrishikeshi* (The Lord of the heart) personally came to the wedding, how could the provisions fall short? He took the sling on His shoulders and brought water. 174. The provisions of the Brahman were put in with the household provisions and thereby these increased to abundance. Five hundred men dined regularly but even then they were not lacking. 175. Even in the hurry of other work, He quickly gave the provisions. He removed the plates after dinner without any delay and swept the yard clean. 176. If any of the diners lacked anything, the Life of the world at once served it to him. He joined His hands and requested the party of the bridegroom to dine quietly. 177. Niloba wondered in his mind and said, 'This Brahman is a very good man. The ceremony has passed off successfully. He lets nothing be lacking'. 178. Then the loving *bhakta* said, 'You were very useful to me in the wedding. Kindly tell me your name.' 179. On this the Life of the world said, 'Vithoba is my name. I ate to my content sweet food in your house for four days of the wedding.' 180. Niloba said to himself, 'I am not able to repay his kindness. But I think I should

cordially give him a cloth at the time of his going. ' 181. Well, Shri Hari lived in his house for five days as a Brahman and personally laboured in the house of His *bhakta*. 182. On the sixth day after seeing the wedding party off, Niloba returned home and *Hrishikeshi* (the Lord of the heart) accompanied him.

183. In the presence of all, the Brahman went into the god-room (i. e. the room containing the idol-shrine) and in a moment's time disappeared. Niloba said, ' I will call Vithoba now. ' 184. With a new gold-bordered scarf in his hand he called to Vithoba in order to put it on him (as a marriage gift and thanksgiving), but the lotus-eyed One could nowhere be seen. 185. At once he understood in his mind what it was and said, ' I put to trouble the Lord of Pandhari. May fire burn up my attachment to family life. To-day I have done a very wrong thing. ' 186. Then the Husband of Rukmini appeared to him in a dream and placed His hand on Niloba's head saying, ' I will for ever remain with you with My hands on My hips. ' 187. For his love of him, Shri Hari is still at Pimpalner. On the second day of the dark half of the month of *Phalgun* (March) there is a great and clamorous festival.

THE STORY OF UDDHAVA CHIDGHAN

188. There is another most interesting narrative of Uddhava Chidghan, an inhabitant of Dharur. He went from country to country lovingly performing *kirtans*. 189. As the result of his experience he had composed many interesting poems in which his audience, consisting of loving, unworldly and pious *bhaktas*, were absorbed. 190. By chance he happened to go to Bedar on the first day of the bright half of *Chaitra* (April) and performed a *kirtan* in the town that day with great *ecstasy*. 191. Many wise and learned men and the pious *bhaktas* of other castes full of love listened to his *kirtan* and their

minds were absorbed in it. 192. The people intended to hold his *kirtans* in succession, but Uddhava said to them, 'I have to go back quickly to Dharur for the festival of *Shri Ram Jayanti* (the festival of Rama's birth).' 193. The people requested him to perform that same *Ramanarami* festival just there, and considering their intention he acquiesced. 194. Then a capacious house was found and a canopy was erected, and in it a chair of state was prepared in which the Lord of Ayodhya (Rama) was seated. 195. He invited *Vaishnava* performers of *kirtans* and had *kirtans* performed. Brahmans were fed with various kinds of daintily cooked foods. 196. On one occasion the noble *Vaishnavas* were going in a procession in bands of singers with banners in their hands. In front of them musical instruments were sounded; and thus there was a great and delightful scene. 197. The *Haridases* (leading singers) went on singing with love near to a mosque where some Muhammadans were sitting at ease. Evil-minded as they were they said between themselves, 198. 'Uddhava Chidghan invites many *Haridases*, and has started a great heathenish nuisance; we will disgrace them by throwing dirt and dung on them.' 199. In those days the Muhammadans were very powerful and none cared to see what was just or what was unjust. Five hundred sly and arrogant Muhammadans of the town were sitting there. 200. The *Haridases* went on singing and dancing and the musical instruments were sounded in front of them. In this way the procession arrived before the mosque.

MUHAMMADANS BEAT VAISHNAVA BHAKTAS

201. The mischievous Muhammadans at once rushed at them and threw cowdung and earth on the *Vaishnavas*. They snatched the banners from their hands and beat them soundly. 202. They broke the strings of the *vinas*

and broke the *mridang* (drum). All fell in confusion, and the *Haridases* returned homeward. 203. The disciples of Uddhav Chidghan at once reported the sad event to him. As he heard it he felt very sad at heart; 204. as a bit of salt falls in milk, and it is spoiled; or as the cook feels restless when a dog touches the cooked food; 205. or as the mother of the bridegroom is sad at heart when the light is put out by a moth (a bad omen) while the bride and bridegroom are dining; in the same way he felt sad; 206. or as when a hungry person puts a mouthful of food into his mouth and at the same time a fly goes in with it; in the same manner when the Muhammadans disgraced the *Haridases*, Uddhava Chidghan felt. 207. Then he went near the state chair of the image and said 'Victory, victory to Thee, O Raghunath. If Thou didst not like this, then where was the necessity of so much ado? 208. Thou art the Soul of the universe and the Husband of Janaki. Thou dwellest in the hearts of all, then why should I lament for nothing? The saints have been dishonoured.' 209. Then he lifted the image of Raghunath and kept it in the god-room. He destroyed the state chair and pulled down the canopy. 210. He bowed to the *Haridases* and sat singing the praises of Shri Rama.

MARUTI DESTROYS A MOSQUE

Maruti became full of anger and said, ' I will turn Bedar (a Muhammadan city) upside down. 211. My Swami is Shri Raghunath, and His *bhaktas* were celebrating His festival. If the *Vaishnavas* are disgraced here in this manner then my life is good for nothing.' 212. Then the son of Anjani (Maruti) stood on the mosque in which the five hundred arrogant and mischievous Muhammadans were sitting. 213. Maruti took hold of a wall of the mosque and shook it with his hands. Close by there was a cottage of a Muhammadan *fakir* (a mendicant) who saw

it. 214. The *fakir* was a very knowing man and understood what it meant. Maruti was angry because the *bhaktas* of Rama had been disgraced. 215. He therefore joined his hands palm to palm and he said to Hanumant (Maruti), 'Close by is my cottage which must be saved.' 216. When the mischievous men heard the words they said between themselves, 'The *fakir* seems to be crazy. We do not know to whom he is talking.' 217. He replied, 'A monkey has come and is about to pull down the mosque. Therefore you get up at once and hurry out.' 218. The mischievous men then said, 'The mosque is built of stones and surely even the father of a monkey will not be able to pull it down.' 219. At this the Servant of Rama (Maruti) flew into a rage and in the twinkling of an eye he brought down the mosque. 220. An uproar of sorrow arose and they said, 'A very astonishing event has taken place.' Then some reported the matter in the Muhammadan square. 221. The report said, 'The mosque suddenly fell down. Many of the mischief-mongers died. Those who survived had a severe internal pain and they rolled on the earth restlessly. 222. The *fakir* who saw the monkey hastened to tell the Muhammadans that Uddhava Chidghan was a great *bhakta* of God, and that they had persecuted him. 223. The mischievous fellows had thrown on them dung and dirt. Therefore it was that the monkey Maruti resolved in his mind to destroy the mosque.'

MUHAMMADAN KING'S PENITENCE

224. Hearing this news, the Muhammadan king was frightened and came to Uddhava Chidghan and bowed to his feet with sincere devotion. 225. He placed at his feet a thousand rupees and said, 'Perform your festival without any fear. 226. The men who persecuted you have gone to the home of death. Now request Maruti to

save us.' 227. The townsmen then assembled together and again put up the canopy. The state chair was decorated and the Husband of Janaki was seated in it. 228. Then with cymbals and drums the *Vaishnavas*, moved by love, sang and danced with delight. They performed the ceremony with great *eclat* again until the twelfth day. 229. Those who hate saints are unhappy all their life. Disasters hunt them out in various ways. 230. All disasters disappear at the remembrance of the feet of Shri Vitthal and bodily afflictions depart at once. 231. On the thirteenth day there was a dramatic performance and the *bhaktas* of Hari were all honoured. Mahipati says that the favour of singing God's praises is the fittest reward to the saints.

232. *Swasti* (Peace)! This book is the *Shri Bhaktavijaya*. The Lord of the world will be pleased to listen to it. Therefore, O pious and loving *bhaktas*, listen to the fifty-sixth interesting chapter.

CHAPTER LVII

VISOBA SARAF

Obeisance to Shri Ganesh. Obeisance to the Inhabitant of the Ocean of Milk.

GOD THE REAL ACTOR

1. Victory, victory to Thee, Whose abode is the ocean of milk, dark as a cloud, of various forms and names, and assuming *avalars* without end, O Good Being. Thy glory is not known even to the *Vedas*. 2. Victory, Victory to Thee, the Enjoyer of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven), Ocean of virtues, and Home of mercy. Knowing Thy glory, the Daughter of the ocean has become a suppliant at Thy feet. 3. Victory to Thee, Dweller at Gokul, Whose complexion is as blue as a cloud, the Stealer of milk and curds, Attractor of the Heart, Inhabitant of Mathura, the Killer of Kansa, and the Founder of religion, O Shri Hari! 4. Victory to Thee, the Inhabitant of Dwarka, Whose banner is with an emblem of the eagle, and who dost act as in a play O *Adhokshaja* (God), Thy glory is without comparison, and only the daughter of King Bhimaka (Laxmi) knows it. 5. Victory, victory to Thee, Whose abode is on the bank of the Bhima river, O Giver of the blessing to Pundalik, and granting assurance to Thy *bhaktas* Thou lettest the shadow of Thy mercy rest on them. 6. O Husband of Rukmini, Thou hast done a wonderful thing in helping me to write this book, dull as I am. Thou hast as it were granted an assurance to a moth, and enabled it to lift (Mount) Meru. 7. Thou didst collect bears and monkeys, and through them didst effect the capture of (the ancient) Lanka city (in Ceylon); as Dnyandev granted a blessing to a buffalo and caused it to recite the

Vedas. 8. As a *paris* (touchstone) lends its virtue to iron and turns it to pure gold; or as the Ganges gives its sacredness to a streamlet; 9. or as musk might cause the earth to be weighed with it as of equal value; in the same way, O Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven), through Thy mercy Thou hast caused my words to be written in a book. 10. O *Adhokshaja* (Vishnu), Thou art the highest of all. With love Thou dost worship Thy *bhaktas*, but Thou dost not come to them when various means of coaxing are used. 11. Thy *bhaktas* sing Thy praises. Thou dost like their lives. Thou hast placed me in the front as Thy instrument; but in reality Thou art the independent speaker.

MAHIPATI'S VALUATION OF HIS BOOK

12. Now let the listener pay attention. The book has come to the last chapter. It is as if while churning the curds one should see butter suddenly; 13. or as if one might see nectar fruit on a mango tree while being watered by him; or as if a medal of gold studded with jewels should itself come and hang around one's neck; 14. or while occupying oneself in cooking one should suddenly obtain a dish of dainty food; or while labouring in a field a dense crop should suddenly appear. 15. I think the last chapter is like the *Gopalkala* on the full moon day at the end of the festival at Pandhari. 16. In this book there are stories of many saints. The chapters thus far are fifty-six in number. These are, as it were, great jewels of fifty-six countries, which shine by their lustre. 17. Or this book, the *Bhak avijaya*, is as it were the collection of fifty-six languages. Need I myself tell you that merely by listening to it the pious ones become victorious. 18. They are, as it were, the sharp weapons of fifty-six countries. The goddess Kalika (wife of Shiva) in the form of forgiveness wields them in Her hands, and on the

buffalo called anger comes riding along, so I think; 19. or they are the rivers of fifty-six countries which bring the water of love and are in loving search of the ocean of delight called Shri Pandurang; 20. or they are, as it were, the kings of fifty-six countries who with victorious flags in their hands easily destroy the army of the enemy of mankind, viz. *maya* (illusion), and enjoy the happy state of the fourth form of salvation, absorption in God. 21. Listen now to the fifty-seventh chapter which is the jewel crowning all the fifty-six chapters; just as the rich lovingly eat cooked rice with curds at the end of their dinner. 22. In the preceding chapter are related the persecution of Uddhava Chidghan by the Muhammadans, the miracle worked by Maruti, and the completion of the festival.

VISOBA SARAF DURING FAMINE

23. Visoba Saraf was a loving *bhakta* of God. He lived in the sacred city of Pandhari. Although a banker, he was indifferent to worldly things. 24. He had four sons and a faithful wife who was favourably inclined to him. She never opposed the order of her husband even in hard times. 25. Visoba never told a falsehood either in his family life or in business. He gave food to the hungry with respect. 26. There was a dreadful famine in the land and grain was sold at two *payalis* a rupee. Hungry Brahmans came and sat in his house. 27. All his wealth and grain were consumed in charity, but the beggars knew nothing of the donor's own condition. 28. A child struggles at its mother's breast, even though there is not a drop of milk in it. Although the subjects suffer many losses, still the king considers them as false. 29. A child cannot realize the ability or inability of his father. Likewise a beggar does not understand the personal difficulties of One who befriends him. 30. The hungry therefore came

and sat at Visoba's door and he gave food to all these as his means permitted. 31. When he could help in no other way, he sold his jewelry and valuable household vessels and thereby gave food to the beggars. 32. He cared nothing at all for popularity or affection; he had given up all care about his domestic life: he was even negligent of his body; and he meditated on the Lord of Pandhari. 33. He had no food for the hungry and no one in the town could give him a loan. People said, 'He has ruined his business and has become notorious as a bankrupt.' 34. Some said, 'He is a fool. He does not understand his own benefit. There are wise men who achieve both worldly gain and spiritual riches. 35. Now those who will believe Visoba will themselves come to the same sad state.' Men and women talked in this manner and all called him names. 36. Some of them said, 'His fate is not favourable to him, for although he had wealth and grain, he never became wearied in using them for pilgrims.'

VISOBA LOANS MONEY FROM A PATHAN

37. In Kasegaon there was a Pathan who did not know Visoba's condition. He (Visoba) borrowed money from him and again gave food to the hungry. 38. He borrowed time and again and the loan amounted to seven hundred rupees. He executed a loan-bond in writing at an interest of two per cent and gave it to him. 39. There was an ascetic of superhuman power by name of Rampuri-bawa. He had gone to Pandhari on pilgrimage and in order to test Visoba he had assumed a very dirty appearance. 40. He thought to himself, 'I must see his condition, whether he is the same to all beings (or whether he makes any distinction)'. 41. He took the filthy mud from the sewer and smeared his person with it. He fastened a string of tatters around his waist and wore a dirty clout.

42. He took an earthen dish to eat from, and when the night advanced three hours he went to his house. 43. Like one crazy he called out to Visoba and said, "I am hungry." When Visoba heard him he came out. 44. Although he did not recognize him as an ascetic of superhuman powers, yet he requested him, 'O *swami*, dine here and then go back to your ashram. 45. Then he (Rampuribawa) placed a dish of food before him, and himself sat in front of him (Visoba). He had dirt on his person and it stank horribly. 46. Visoba with warm water washed him with his own hands. Then quietly wiping him he put on him a new clout. 47. He offered him sandalwood paste and rice and worshipped him, and put around his neck garlands of *tulsi* leaves; then fed him and prostrated himself before him. 48. He gave him a leaf of *tulsi* for cleansing the mouth and saw him off. Rampuri thought to himself, 'He (Visoba) is surely an adept in the knowledge of the soul. 49. He has the same eye for the tiger, the cow, and the scorpion. If an expert in such matters were to search for another man like him he could hardly find one. 50. For he honours in the same way a prince and a pauper. Even if searched for on the earth there cannot be many like him. 51. He looks on the wealth and wife of another person as a vomit. There are not many like him, even if the three worlds were searched. 52. The Husband of Rukmini stays day and night at the house of him who pays the same respect to the helpless, to beggars and to Brahmans. 53. Such is the state of mind of Visoba and therefore he worshipped me.' So thinking the ascetic went to the ashram.

VISOBA'S BANKRUPTCY

54. Then an evil-minded person went to the Pathan of Kasegaon and told him the news of Visoba's insolvency. 55. He said, 'Go and ask for your money now.' Then

he went to Pandhari at once and addressed Visoba. 56. 'Pay back my money without delay or else I will sit dunning at your door.' 57. Hearing what he said, the loving *bhakta* felt very concerned and said to himself, 'I have no money at hand to pay you, what shall I do?' 58. Then bracing his mind with courage he told the creditor that he would send him the money after seven days. 59. He said, 'O Brahman, I cannot put faith in you, therefore let there be someone as security.' Then he invited some persons and told them of the agreement. 60. The men assured the Pathan that Visoba never told a lie and that on that day he was sure to send the money to him. 61. At this assurance the creditor got up and said as he went that he should think well and pay off the money. 62. Saying this the Pathan went back to Kasegaon and he determined to recover the money as soon as the period was over. 63. The six days went by and Visoba was very anxious in his mind. He said, 'The creditor will be waiting for the money, what shall I do now?' 64. I have never told a falsehood, but now the time has unfortunately come at last.' He was sad at heart and looked very grave. 65. He was engaged in the worship of God but his mind was not at rest. The creditor was before his mind's eye and he could not restrain his restlessness.

VISOBA'S UNEXPECTED HELP

66. When the Husband of Rukmini saw this difficulty of Visoba's He assumed the form of his old secretary. 67. The Lord of Pandhari took the principal, viz., rupees seven hundred, and its interest, went to Kasegaon and said to the Pathan, 68. 'You know me as the old secretary of Visoba. He sends me here as the seven days are at an end.' 69. Now you reckon up your account, together with the principal and its interest.' The creditor was astonished

at heart as he heard *Chakrapani* (Vishnu) saying this. 70. Then the Pathan asked the Brahman, 'He could not obtain a loan. Where has he found a creditor? I really wonder.' 71. On this the Husband of Rukmini replied, 'Visoba is very righteous; he never tells any lie whatever.' 72. The Life of the world sat near him, asked him to fetch the loan-deed and said, 'Ask some men to come here and in their presence square your accounts.' 73. The Friend of His *bhaktas* paid the money in the presence of some of the men of the town and took the deed from him. 74. He went to Visoba's home in Pandharpur, and tearing the deed a little at the top, left it in his book.

75. As he untied his *Bhagavadgita* he saw the deed executed in his name. He made out his own handwriting and felt very much astonished. 76. Said he, 'I have not returned the loan of the Pathan, then who has destroyed the deed?' He asked his wife and sons about it. 77. Then he patched the deed on the back and joined it as before. 'It must go to him to whom it belongs,' he said. 78. The pious *bhakta* of God went to Kasegaon and saw the Pathan in the bazaar who enquired, 'Why have you come?' 79. Your old secretary came to me this morning in a hurry, paid off my money with interest and took away the deed.' 80. Visoba replied, 'I do not know anything about it, but just to-day I saw the deed quite accidentally in my book. 81. I had no money to pay you but I had the destroyed deed. Therefore I came to tell you about it.' 82. When the God-loving *bhakta* said this the creditor answered, 'No, it is a lie.' Then he asked the men to come in whose presence the money had been paid off. 83. They also told the same story which made him wonder very much. Then he immediately returned to the sacred city of Pandhari. 84. He sent for his secretary and asked him about it. 'How did you pay off my loan? Tell me the truth.' 85. He said, 'I swear

by Pandurang that I know nothing about it.' As he said this, tears streamed from the eyes of Visoba. 86. He exclaimed, 'O Ocean of mercy, the Lord of the world, Thou didst worry Thyself for my sake.' Saying this he clasped the feet of God and was overcome with love. 87. The Husband of Rukmini said to Visoba, 'This is known all over the sacred town. Men and women have seen the evidence and wonder at it.'

GOD HELPS HIS *BHAKTAS* IN THEIR DIFFICULTIES

88. When a God loving *bhakta* is in difficulty, the One Who is as blue as a cloud comes to his help at once. The Merciful to the lowly does not think of time. 89. In the past, during the *Krita*, *Treta*, and *Dwapar* Ages, there were real *avatars* of God, and Bhagwant (God) saved His *bhaktas*. Can there be any wonder in this? 90. In the *Kali Yuga*, Shripati is personally present in an image of stone, and in His Buddha (silent) form He still gives various evidences to His people and increases the reputation of the saints. 91. But the *Kali Yuga* is better than all the past three Ages, for in the *Bhagwat*, Shuka has said that the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu) meets with His *bhaktas* within three and a half *ghatikas*. 92. But there is one difficulty. The *bhakta* must be pious and simple. Bhagwant (God) helps him who is not entangled in the snare of wrong conceptions. 93. 'It may be, or it may not be,' he who with such a doubt at heart, worships God, becomes an enemy of his own interest, and remains at a distance from the feet of Hari. 94. The Husband of Rukmini heartily wishes that His *bhaktas* should fall into difficulties, and then that He should rush to their aid and thus increase their fame; 95. just as a boatman at the bank of a river thinks, 'I should like to see a drowning person, and then I will jump into the water at once and pull him out.' 96. A generous person starts

a charitable dining house and day and night just wishes that a hungry person would come to him and then he could feed him to satisfaction. 97. A good physician thinks, 'The king should have some disease and then I will treat him for my own benefit and cure him of his disease.' 98. A wise speaker thinks in his mind, 'Someone should come with his difficulties and then with many illustrations I will solve all his doubts.' 99. In the same manner, with both His hands on His hips, the Husband of Rukmini thinks in His mind, 'The *bhaktas* should throw their burden on Me and give themselves up to meditation; 100. then I will help them and increase their reputation in the world.' Shripati always thinks like this but no one else has the courage to do it.

CHAPTER LVII

(*Continued*)

SUMMARY OF THE *BHAKTAVIJAYA*

101. Thus far the good people have listened quietly to the interesting stories of *bhaktas* who had severed the snares of desires and had cast away all love for their perishable persons.

CHAPS: 1-3 JAYADEV & TULSIDAS

102. Now I will recapitulate the contents from the beginning of the book. In the beginning, I bowed to Ganesh and Sarasvati and then meditated on the feet of my *Sadguru*. 103. Many sins were committed in the *Kali Yuga*. This was known in the ocean of milk. Then the Husband of Lakshmi told His *bhaktas* to become *avatars* in the world of mortals, 104. in order to explain the glory of God's name to the people and make them worship God. This all have listened to in the *first chapter*. 105. That the thieves persecuted Jayadev, that Padmavati lied, and that the Life of the world brought her back to life, is all related in the *second chapter*. 106. A stone bull was made to eat food, a dead body was made alive by a blessing, and Tulsidas met with Raghunandan (Rama): all this is described in the *third chapter*.

CHAPS: 4-15 NAMDEV, KABIR AND DNYANESHWAR

107. Nama was found in a shell at which Damasheti greatly rejoiced, and the conversation between the Lord of Pandhari and Gonai is given: these things are

told in the fourth. 108. Kabir's birth by means other than the womb; his bringing up in a Muhammadan family; how the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna) wove the gold-bordered scarf for him ; and made him righteous by His own mercy; 109. that he committed a theft for the saints and killed his own son, Kamal, with his own hand ; how the king hanged Kamal, and how the saints brought him to life again ; 110. the assembling of saints in his yard ; and the help which the Lord of Ayodhya rendered Kabir by assuming his form in countless ways : with these stories there ends the seventh chapter. 111. Nivritti, Sopan and Dnyaneshwar were born as *avalars* from a *sannyasi* ; the Brahmans excommunicated them; these beautiful things are related in the eighth chapter. 112. In the ninth chapter is related the well-known story of how Dnyaneshwar made a he-buffalo to recite the *Vedas* ; how he worked a miracle by feeding his ancestors by *mantras* ; 113. Dnyan-dev takes Nama from Pandhari with him to sacred places : and Nama brings to life a dead cow in his *kirtan* at Hastanapur (Delhi) ; all this is described in the tenth chapter. 114. Kabir's wife was very virtuous ; this made the grocer repent ; his meeting with Nama ; these things are described in the eleventh chapter. 115. How in Marwad the people were troubled by thirst and there gushed out water from the well, and how the god Naganath made the temple turn round, are related in the twelfth chapter. 116. In the thirteenth chapter we see the Lord of Pandhari dining with Nama in the dark half of *Magh* (March) and therefore the Brahmans excommunicated God. 117. *Adhokshaja* (Krishna) tells Rukmini that He likes His *bhaktas* very much and Satyabhama asked a secret of Narad ; these things are related in the fourteenth chapter. 118. God assumed a *sagun* form and manifested Himself to the Brahmans and consigned them to the care of Dnyan-dev : this story is related in the fifteenth chapter.

CHAPS: 16-21 KURMADAS; RAKA & GORA; NAMDEV;
JAGAMITRA NAGA; JOGA PARAMANAND; NARAHARI
& NAMDEV; NAMDEV & JANABAI

119. God went to meet Savata who hid Him in his stomach; this wonderful sight was shown to Nama; and then God met Kurmadas; these narratives are given in the *sixteenth chapter*. 120. Gora the potter trampled on his own child; the Lord of the heart was pleased with him in his *kirtan*; the stumps of his hands were made whole; the child (being brought back to life) was given to its mother; 121. the kittens were put in the furnace, and the Lord of Pandhari saved them; Raka the potter had a remarkable ascetic spirit: these stories are described in the *seventeenth chapter*. 122. In the *eighteenth chapter* there is the wonderful story of how all the saints laughed at Nama, how the Lord of Pandhari then pointed out Visoba as his guru. 123. how at Nama's touch the particles of sand turned to so many touchstones, how Nama showed this wonder to Parisa Bhagwat and gave him the favour (the mystic *mantra*). 124. In the *nineteenth chapter* is related how Jagamitra was tormented by the *Havaladar* (or village officer); the Lord of the heart then appeared as a tiger, and showed the wonderful sight to the people. 125. In the *twentieth chapter* is related how Joga (Parmanand) felt great repentance, tied himself to bullocks, and in this way mortified himself; how the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna) met with him, and assured him with a blessing; 126. how Narhari Sonar observed a difference [between Shankar (Shiva) and Hari (Vishnu); and how Murari (Vishnu) met with him in one form, are related. 127. In the *twenty-first chapter* is described the story of how the Lord of Pandhari ground corn with Jani, and Himself wrote the *abhangs* composed by her at which the saints laughed joyfully.

CHAPS: 22-30 MATSYENDRANATH, GORAKNATH &
 CHANGDEV; CHOKHAMELA, NAMDEV, JIVA &
 TATVA; PADMANABH & KABIR; ROHIDAS;
 KING PIPAJI; NARSI MEHETA & THE
 MATURITY CEREMONY OF HIS DAUGHTER

128. How Shankar (Shiva) gave the mystic *mantra* to Parvati; how it produced Matsyendra from the womb of a fish; how through God's *lila* (sport) Goraksha was produced from the ashes of a dunghill; 129. how Changdev made a tiger his vehicle; and how Dnyandev made a wall move, and met with him under the *Vishrantvat* (a banian tree under which they rested); these are narratives found in the *twenty-second chapter*. 130. In the *twenty-third chapter* the story of Chokhamela is given and two Brahmans, Jiva and Tatva, were excommunicated by their caste because they had become Kabir's disciples. 131. In the *twenty-fourth chapter* the story of Padmanabha is given, his disease destroyed as he simply uttered 'Shri Rama,' and how Kabir 'sold' his wife to a grocer, are all related in this chapter. 132. The *bhakta* Rohidas was troubled by the Brahmans because he had put Shaligram (God) in a skin; he ripped open his stomach and showed them the sacred thread: this is related in the *twenty-fifth*. 133. Pipaji out of repentance abandoned his kingdom, and while Ramkrishna was coming from Dwarka he gave the mystic *mantra* to a tiger, all this is related in the *twenty-sixth*. 134. Narsi Meheta's life is very lengthy and his story is ended in the *thirtieth chapter*; Shri Shankar met with him and showed him the *Rasmandal*; 135. his son was married and the Life of the world cashed his cheque; in the maturity ceremony of his daughter He provided clothes and ornaments.

CHAPS : 31-36 RAMDAS OF DAKUR; KALYAN & NIRADHAR;
BLIND SURDAS; SENA; KING SATVIK & KARMABAI;
JANAJASWANT & SURDAS MADANMOHAN

136. Seeing the devotion of Ramdas, Chakrapani came to Dakur; this is related in the *thirty-first chapter*; may good people know it. 137. In the *thirty-second* the image of Mathura walked as far as Hardwar. In the *thirty-third*, Shripati (Vishnu) met with Surdas at Mathura. 138. In the *thirty-fourth chapter* the Husband of Rukmini assumed the form of the barber Sena and the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna) shaved the head of the (Muhammadan) king and captivated his mind. 139. In the *thirty-fifth* there is a wonderful story of how the king had his hand cut off, and how the Lord of the world was pleased with him and made it as it was before; 140. and seeing the devotion of Karmabai, the image of stone dined with her, and the worshippers of God had a dream of this at which they very much wondered. 141. In the *thirty-sixth* two biographies are given: Surdas Madanmohan, and how Shri Raghunandan (Rama) rescued Janajaswant who was being drowned in a pond.

CHAPS: 37-44 RASIK MURAR; MIRABAI; KANHOPATRA;
DAMAJIPANT; MRITYUNJAYA; BHANUDAS; AND
BAHIRAMBHAT

142. In the *thirty-seventh chapter* is the beautiful story of the loving *bhakta* Rasik Murar; to the elephant he gave the mystic *mantra*, and the king he enraptured in a moment. 143. Poison was given to Mirabai, a loving *bhakta* of God, but it turned to nectar: this story is described in the *thirty-eighth chapter*. 144. The meeting of Kanhopatra with the Lord of Pandhari, and the Husband of Rukmini saved the *bhakta* Damajipant; these stories are related in *chapters thirty-nine* and *forty* respectively. 145. In the *forty-first* the glory of Mrityunjaya is related;

he made dogs vomit emblems of Shiva. In the *forty-second* is described how Shripati sat holding the horse of Bhanudas, and their meeting. 146. God had gone to Vidyanagar, and Bhanudas brought Him back to Pandhari; the impaling stake sprouted into leaves; good people have heard all this related [in the *forty-third chapter*]. 147. In the *forty-fourth chapter* Naganath gave Bahirambhat a second birth, and dispelling his doubts taught him the knowledge of the soul.

CHAPS: 45-52 EKNATH & SHRI KHANDYA;
RAMDAS ; TUKARAM

148. In the *forty-fifth* there is the story of Eknath who went as a suppliant to Janardan; he brought about a meeting between him and Shri Datta, and thus favoured him. 149. In the *forty-sixth* we read that in the guise of a Brahman the Lord of Dwarka served him, and that Eknath came to know about it twelve years later. 150. Chapter *forty-seven* tells how Ramdas was a real avatar of Maruti, ran away from behind the marriage curtain, and how the Husband of Rukmini met him in the form of Rama at Pandhari. 151. In the *forty-eighth* is the story of how Tuka became an ascetic and how the Lord of the heart came into his *kirtan* and drove away the enemy's army. 152. In the *forty-ninth* we see how Tukaram gave a piece of advice to his wife, and through her generosity had her loot her house by Brahmans. 153. In the *fiftieth* is the interesting story of how Tukaram's wife beat him on his back with a piece of sugarcane, and how he wrote a letter full of the sentiment of compassion and sent it to Pandhari. 154. In the *fifty-first chapter* may the wise know that God stood on the shoulders of Nimbaraj in the *kirtan*. 155. Shekh Muhammad knew that the canopy (where Tukaram was performing his *kirtan*) was on fire by the touch of a burning torch; and Tuka's

manuscripts of *abhangs* floated dry on the river; these stories are described in the *fifty-second chapter*.

CHAPS: 53-57 MANKOJI BODHLA; GANESHNATH; KESHAV SWAMI; GOMAI & LATIBSHAH; SANTOBA POWAR; NILOBA; UDDHAVA CHIDGHAN; VISOBA SARAF; SUMMARY

156. Bodhla has his farm plundered and the revenue of his land is paid up by the Lord of Pandhari; the stumps of corn are full of innumerable ears; these stories are given in the *fifty-third chapter*. 157. In the *fifty-fourth* we read how a dead body was brought to life in a *kirtan*; how the slave Hansi was put out of sight; and how a Mahar was disgraced. 158. Hearers must have listened to the four stories described in chapter *fifty-five*, including the story that Ganeshnath out of mercy gave the mystic *mantra* to a tree; 159. in the *kirtan* of Keshav Swami the saints were saved, even though they had eaten the poisonous *bachanag*; the Lord of Pandhari took Gomial to the other bank of the river, and ate her cakes with love; 160. seeing the devotion of Latibshah, the picture (of Krishna) at once ate the *vida* (rolled betelnut leaves); and the Muhammadan king came as a suppliant and then went back to his place. 161. In the *fifty-sixth* there is the singular story how the God of gods in the form of a tortoise, seeing the devotion of Santoba Powar, took all the pilgrims to the other side of the river; 162. how at the time of Niloba's daughter's wedding God provided him with the materials of food; and how at Badar, Maruti destroyed a mosque and gave provisions of food to Uddhava Chidghan, this is related in the *fifty-sixth chapter*. 163. Visoba Saraf was perfectly pious, and God paid off his loan (according to what we read in chapter *fifty-seven*): this all the listeners have recently heard. 164. These (*fifty-six chapters*) are, as it were, the royal swans of fifty-six countries. They, with bunches of pearls in the form of the stories of

God's *bhaktas*, assembled at the Manas Lake in the form of chapter *fifty-seven* to have sport. 165. (In the world) the earthly and spiritual lives were mixed together like water and milk. The royal swans put their beaks into it and separated milk from water. 166. These *fifty-six* chapters are, as it were, precious and divine gems, and the *fifty-seventh* is as it were a plate of gold; the plate is studded with jems, and with it God Whose abode is in *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven) was worshipped. 167. The *bhaktas* who are lovers of God and free from desires are as it were the tender sprouts of *tulsi*; and stringing them into a garland the Merciful to the lowly is worshipped. 168. Or these are as it were pure stones of fifty-six countries; and fixing the *fifty-seventh* as the best place, a temple was erected on it, and in it was installed Him who is as blue as a cloud.

OTHER SAINTS CHARACTERIZED

169. There are many other *Vaishnava* saints and *Mahants* and well-known *bhaktas*; they are as it were handfuls of flowers which should be offered to God: 170. Bhartrihari and Jalandhar, Sadanand and Shankaracharya, and the generous King Gopichand and the thoughtful Narsinhanagar. 171. Hirasing, a grocer of Gujerat, Malukdas and Gangakavishvar, Charpati and Chaurangi, all these great *bhaktas* made the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna) their own. 172. Dhanajat, Bajidkhan, Baba and Nanaksadan, and Narsinhabharati Narayan and the thoughtful Achyutashram; 173. Halsi, Avaghad, and the *bhakta* Mudhaya, and Mukundraj of world-wide fame who composed the *Viveksindhu*, a philosophical work, by personal intuition; 174. Krishanambhat Yadnyavalki and the thoughtful Krishnadas Mudgal; Kanhaya, Haridas and Namapathki, these *bhaktas* of God are known in the world; 175. Lolimbraj, Chandbodhla, and the well-

known Shaikh Farid, and Shaikh Husen of excessive righteousness, these are the *bhaktas* whom God loves; 176. Narahari, Jayaram and Malopant, and the loving *bhakta*: Narsinhasarasvati, and Mahamudgalbhat of world-wide renown who made the Husband of Janaki his own; 177. Ekling Mairal, who was an ascetic of superhuman power, and the well-known Sumati Kamalakar, Renukandan the root of joy, whose *lilā* (deeds) are unfathomable; 178. Shripati and Dasopant, and Madhavdas of world-wide renown; Pralhad Badve and Papujipant were very much liked by God; 179. Gosavinandan and Vamansvami, Giribai, Chinmaynandan; the Life of the World was pleased at listening to the *kirtan* of Basvalinga; 180. Antoba and Bhagvantbhat, and the solely devoted Vitthal Purandar; God, whose abode is in *Vaikunth*, was pleased with the urgency of Mainavati; 181. Lalunkhoji Paramanand and Dadu Pinjari of perfect delight, seeing the intense love of Bahinabai, Govind danced in her *kirtan*; 182. Shridhar Swami of Nazre, the inhabitant of Pandharpur and the author of the great works of the *Harivijaya*, the epitome of the *Ramavijaya*, and the *Pandavpratap*; 183. Shivram Gosavi of Paithan, the son of Narayan Nimbaya whose enthusiastic *kirtan* the Husband of Rukmini rejoiced to listen to; 184. Tuka had a brother by name of Kanhaya, and his younger son, Narayan, who abandoning his wife went to Dwarka; 185. Bhagvantbawa the grandson of Bodhla, so also Narobababa of Paithan, had an immense liking for a *kirtan*, and love for the praises of God; 186. Anandtanay, of world-wide renown, and Raghupatishesha who possessed perfect knowledge, listening to whose *kirtan* the wise became wholly absorbed; 187. Madhvamunishvar, a great *bhakta* and inhabitant of Shendurvadiya, had great skill in composing *padas* (songs), which enraptured the Holder of the *Sharang* bow (Krishna); 188. Shakarjibava of Shiur, who performed a *kirtan* with great.

enthusiasm, was also an adept in philosophical knowledge and was as a lion to the non-believers; 189. Amritray was a loving *bhakta* of God, his poetry very sweet and appealing, listening to which even the revilers and the wicked were at once melted through his love. 190. There have been such loving *bhaktas* in the world, who possessed the boon of God's grace; I prostrate myself at their feet. 191. I bow repeatedly to the feet of Moresh-varbava of Tambve, who was a great follower of the Bhagvat religion.

WARKARIS OF PANDHARI AND FUTURE SAINTS

192. I bow to the feet of the loving *bhaktas*, who became the *Warkaris* (pilgrims) of Pandhari. 193. With love and delight I bow to those *bhaktas* who live in Pandhari, the inhabitants of the sacred town. 194. There will be many more *Vaishnava bhaktas* in the future, who will disappear and appear again at their feet; I prostrate myself with devotion. 195. There are innumerable *avatars* of God. It is beyond our power to count them, just as the drops of rain which fall on the earth cannot be counted. 196. There are plants on the earth which cannot be counted. How can the waves of the ocean be counted? 197. The Actor as it were in a play, the Husband of Rukmini, became Himself both the God and His *bhakta*. If we visit Him we naturally visit all saints. 198. The sight of the ocean means the sight of all the rivers. When you bow to the sun you see all his rays. 199. When you circumambulate the pipal tree, all its branches are included. In the same way there is no duality between the *bhaktas* and the Lord of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). 200. As a skilful person cannot differentiate between sugar and its sweetness, so consider the Dweller on the banks of the Bhima and His *bhaktas* as one in heart.

THE GLORY OF THE SAINTS

201. The *Bhaktavijaya* is the result of these two (God and His saints). The listeners will obtain their wishes by just listening to it. 202. Those who continually sing of the lives of the *bhaktas* will be endowed with a wonderful spiritual knowledge. The Lord of Pandhari will favour them and meet with them of a certainty. 203. If one has this book in his house hindrances will never enter there, for Vishnu will turn the *Sudarshan* wheel of G d round him ; bear this well in your mind. 204. The most emphatic thing in this book is that the Life of the World was pleased with His *bhaktas*. Therefore the Husband of Rukmini protects both the speaker and the listeners. 205. The wise should not consider the lives of the saints of *Kali Yuga* as commonplace. Great *munis* will sing of the saints of the *Kali Yuga*, the *Krita* and *Dwapar Yugas*. 206. 'The gods were greatly delighted at the commencement of the *Kali Yuga*. For if one concentrates his mind for only three *ghatikas* and a half he will meet with the Lord of *Vaikunth*. 207. Then the Muni Narad did a very wonderful thing. He held his tongue and his sexual organ with his hands, at which all the gods were astonished and they asked him the explanation of it; 208. on this the son of Brahma (Narad) replied, 'These two will not be restrained in the *Kali Yuga*.' As the gods heard it they were full of concern. 209. Then Narad told them that those who will listen to the lives of the *Vaishnava bhaktas* of the *Kali Yuga*, the Lord of *Vaikuṇṭh* (Vishnu) will meet with them. 210. As the son of Brahmadev (Narad) thus spoke, all the gods were delighted and said, ' We like this simple means (of salvation).' 211. Therefore the lives of God's *bhaktas* purify even the great sages and Indra and other gods. May the wise listen to these assertions and entertain no doubt.

GOD THE INSPIRER OF THIS BOOK

212. I have written in this book as much as I was ordered by the Husband of Rukmini. The musical instruments accompany their tunes with the musician. 213. We sow the seed in fields, but its sprouting depends on rain, just as the dancing of the wooden dolls depends on the pulling of the strings. 214. In the same manner, in writing this book, the *Bhaktavijaya*, the Inspirer of the intellect is the Husband of Rukmini. He sharpened my intellect and caused me to write this work as He wished.

DATE OF THE COMPOSITION

215. In the Shalivahan era 1684 (A. D. 1762), in the Chitrabhanu *samvatsar*, on the twelfth dark of *Vaishakh* (May), the book was completed. 216. To the South of the Pravara river there is the town Taharabad at a distance of ten miles. This very interesting *Bhaktavijaya* was composed there.

MAHIPATI'S CONCLUDING PRAYER

217. Now, O Lord of Pandhari, listen to my final request. Thou art the Speaker and the Listener and the Protector of the book through Thy mercy. 218. Thou art the only imperishable *Guru* of the whole world. Thou art beyond *maya* (illusion) and art Lord of all. Thou art the Refuge of the helpless. Thou dost enable Thy servants to cross over the ocean of this worldly existence. 219. Thou dost fulfil the cravings of Thy *bhaktas* in a moment. Seeing their pure love Thou dost dwell in their lotus-hearts. 220. To some Thou hast given the knowledge of the soul. Some asked for the last stage of deliverance. My mind also wishes the same, so that I may be able to sing of the deeds of Hari. 221. Some sit on *vajrasan* (the spiked bed), and some are dwelling in the land of *Vaikunth* (Vishnu's heaven). As for me, out of love I take delight

in singing the praises of Thy servants. 222. With unwearied love in my heart I have praised Thy servants. I Mahipati ask for this one reward, that with abiding love for the saints I should praise Thy servants.

223. *Swasti* (Peace) ! This book is the *Bhaktavijaya*, by listening to which the Lord of the world will be pleased Therefore, O loving and pious *bhaktas*, listen to the very delightful fifty-seventh chapter. Here ends the *Bhaktavijaya*.

APPENDIX I

NOTES ON PAURANIC NAMES IN THE *BHAKTAVIJAYA*

AKRUR

One of the Yādavas, the son of Shvaphalka and Gāndini, and always taking Krishna's side. Considering him to be a faithful messenger, Kansa sent him to fetch Krishna to Mathura from Gokul and kill him. But he explained all Kansa's plans to Krishna. By many stratagems he had obtained the possession of the *Syamantak* jewel.

AGASTI

A well known *rishi*, the son of Mitrāvaruna. He made the Vindhyādrī mountain range lie flat and thus humbled it. At the request of great *rishis* he drank up the ocean at one gulp and thus destroyed the Kalkeya *asuras* (demons) who had hidden in it. It was he who gave to Rama a sword, a bow, and a quiver ever full. He colonized the Deccan. *Vide Appendix II p. 432.*

AJĀMIL

A Brahman of the country of Kanyakubjs. He had abandoned his parents and wife, and spent his life in the company of a Shudra woman. He dearly loved the youngest child of the Shudra woman by name Narayan. In this state he happened to hear a discussion about him between the messengers of Yama (the god of death) and Vishnu. On this he repented and, discarding his Shudra wife and children, spent his remaining days at Gangādwar in the service of God, and thereby obtained *moksha* after death.

ARJUNA

The third of the Pandavas, the son of King Pandu, and born to Kunti as the boon of the god Indra. A favourite disciple of Dronacharya; expert in archery whereby at the *swayamvar* of Draupadi (choice of a husband ceremony) he won her. At the time of the royal sacrifice of his brother Yudhishtira he conquered the Northern country. He pleased the god Shiva in the form of a hunter and obtained divine missiles from Him. He acted as a female dancer while living in disguise at the house of Virāta. At the time of the great Indian Civil War Krishna explained to him his duty now embodied in the *Gita*.

ANASUYĀ

The wife of the *Rishi* Atri and mother of the *Rishis* Datta and Durvāsa, known also as a very faithful wife and a great female ascetic. Once upon a time the gods Brahmā, Vishnu and Mahesha (Shiva), in accordance with the hints of their wives came to test her wifely fidelity but by the force of her purity she turned them into children and then at the request of their wives she again gave them their previous forms; by her desire, portions of these three gods led to the *avatar* of Dattatreya being born. During Rama's wanderings she gave to Sita an ointment which kept her beauty ever fresh and protected her from wild animals and demons.

AMBARISH

A king of the solar race, very powerful and a great devotee of Vishnu. He observed a strict fast on *Ekādashi* (the eleventh day of every fortnight). Once on a time the *Rishi* Durvās suddenly came to him on the twelfth day just as the king was to break his fast. He therefore invited the *Rishi* to dine with him. The *Rishi*, however, went to the river to bathe ceremonially and as he was late in

coming back, the time for the king breaking the fast was passing away. So the king, in order that his observance might not suffer, offered the food to God and broke his fast by drinking the holy water in which the gods were washed. When on his return from the river the *Rishi* learnt of it he fell into a great rage, and from a lock of his hair created a demoness and made her follow the king to persecute him. But meanwhile the disk of the god Vishnu, ever ready to protect him, destroyed the demoness and pursued the *Rishi* Durvas, who went to all the great gods for protection but none would vouchsafe it to him. Finally he went to Vishnu who asked him to go as a suppliant to the king who had fasted a whole year for him, and then only would he be free from the pursuit of the disk. He went to the king who on seeing him was pleased and prayed the disk to stop the pursuit. The king freed Durvās and dined in his company.

ABHIMANYU

The son of Arjuna and Subhadrā, and the nephew of Krishna and Balarām; a great warrior like his father. He valorously broke his way through the army of the enemy arranged in a circle but was unable to come back and was treacherously killed. He was the father of King Parikshiti.

ARUNA

The son of Vinatā wife of Kashyapa; also the chariot-eer of the Sun; the elder brother of Garud (the divine eagle, Vishnu's vehicle) and the father of Sampāti and Jatāyu. Vinatā broke the egg which contained him before maturity and therefore he was born without legs.

AHALYĀ

The wife of the *Rishi* Gautama, the mother of Shatānand, and the adopted daughter of the god Brahma

Through ignorance she cohabited with the god Indra, and so was cursed by her husband and was turned into a slab of stone. Rama restored her to life by the dust of His foot.

INDRA

The chief of gods. In one day of Brahmadeva there are fourteen Indras. The present one is called Purandar. The name of the wife of Indra is Indrāni. *Vide Appendix II p. 423.*

INDRAJIT

Son of Rāvana. By the performance of many sacrifices he obtained from Shankar (God Shiva) a divine chariot, weapons and missiles. He captured Indra in battle and made him captive and therefore is named as Indrajit. His former name was Meghanād. By the missiles of Brahma he fastened Māruti the monkey-god who had gone in search of Sitā, and brought him into the royal court of Rāvana. In three hours he killed sixty-seven crores of monkeys and had thrown Rama and Lakshman into a swoon, but ultimately he was killed by Lakshman.

UGRASEN

King of Mathura, Kansa's father. Kansa had imprisoned him, but Krishna killed Kansa and reinstalled Ugrasen.

UTTĀNAPĀD

A king of the solar race. He had two wives, Sunīti and Suruchi by name. Dhruva was his son born from Suniti.

UDDHAVA

The nephew of Vasudev, a great devotee of Krishna and always accompanied him. They loved each other very much. When Krishna departed from Gokul to Mathura he sent Uddhava to console the *Gopis* and Nanda and Yashodā. Krishna explained to him the knowledge of the soul as he

(Krishna) passed away from this world. Then he went to Badrikāshram in accordance with Krishna's command.

UPAMANYU

The eldest son of Vyāghrapād *Rishi*, in the family line of Vashishtha; and elder brother of Dhaumya. His mother used to give him flour mixed with water instead of milk. Once when he had drunk real milk in a neighbour's house he obstinately asked for that kind of milk from his mother who felt sad and said, 'How can you obtain milk unless you please God? Our good deeds in our former births are not so strong as to give you milk.' Upon this he practised severe austerities and obtained the boon of mastery over the ocean of milk, and life as long as the world existed. He was a devotee of Shiva, and through him Krishna took the Shaiva vow.

URVASHI

A heavenly damsel born from the thigh of the *Rishi* Nārāyan of Badrikāshram, and the wife of king Pururavā, the first of the lunar race.

EKALAVYA

A fisherman by caste who made an earthly image of Dronācharya, regarded it as his *guru* and by dint of his great devotion learned from it the art of archery, becoming mightier than Arjuna. On one occasion Dronācharya witnessed his valour and made him promise as an honorarium to his *guru*, not to use his right thumb in archery. Even to this day the people of the hunter-caste stick to this promise.

KARNA

Born to Kunti before her marriage, through the *mantra* of the sun. For fear of public shame she put him into a box and threw him into a river. A charioteer

Adhirath by name found the box and brought up the child. His wife's name was Rādhā, and hence he himself was named Rādheya. Learning the art of archery with the Kauravas and Pandavas he became the rival of Arjuna in that art. Duryodhan then gave him the kingdom of Anga and formed friendship with him. He was a great donor, and when the god Indra went to him in the disguise of a Brahman asking for his armour and earrings, he gave these to him. In order to defeat Arjuna he went to Parashurām (the sixth *avatar* of Vishnu) as a Brahman and learned from him the use of missiles, but when Parashurām found out that he was a Kshatriya and not a Brahman he pronounced the curse that he would not remember the use of the art at the time of battle. While hunting he had once by chance killed a Brahman's cow who gave the curse that the earth would swallow the wheel of his chariot while fighting on the battlefield. Krishna and Kunti both narrated to him the circumstances of his birth, and sought to persuade him not to fight against the Pandavas, his brothers, but he did not listen to them and he was at last killed by Arjuna.

KADARYU

A Brahman inhabitant of Avanti (modern Ujjain), who was so miserly that his wife and children and other relatives robbed him of everything and drove him out of the house. On that account and also on account of the influence of the good deeds in his former births he turned an ascetic and obtained complete peace of mind. People tried their best to bring him down from that state, but in vain. Just for this virtue of his, Shri Krishna has related his story to Uddhava in the *Bhāgavat*.

KAYĀDHU

The wife of Hiranyakashipu, the daughter of Jambhāsura and the mother of Pralhād. When she was bearing

Pralhād her husband went away on austerities. Taking this opportunity Indra slew many demons and when he was taking her to heaven the *Rishi* Nārād met him and said, 'Her son will be a Vishnu-*bhakta* and will not hate you,' and thus freed her, and staying with her on the bank of the Bhāgirathi, gave her soul-knowledge. This knowledge Pralhād heard while in her womb and thereby became a *bhakta* of God Vishnu. After this the *Rishi* Nārād gave her back to her husband.

KANSA

The son of Ugrasen of the race of the Yādavas, a cousin of Devaki and the king of Mathura. In the ceremony of Devaki's marriage he heard a divine voice that he would be killed by her son, and therefore he killed her six sons. When Krishna was born and was sent to Gokul (surreptitiously), Kansa tried to kill him by sending many of his hirelings there, but failed in his attempt. Then finally Krishna and Balarām were brought to Mathura under the pretext of wrestling with his wrestlers, but they killed these wrestlers and Kansa as well.

KĀLAYAVAN

Born to a Yavan king's wife from the sage Garga for the purpose of defeating the Yādavas. He was a great warrior and invincible against the Yādavas. Krishna had him killed at the hands of the sage Muchakund.

KĀLINDI

The seventh wife of Krishna. She performed austerities on the banks of the Jumna river and married Krishna.

KUBJĀ

A maidservant of Kansa. She was personally crippled in three places. While at Mathura with his brother Balarām at the invitation of Kansa, Krishna healed her.

KUSHA AND LAVA

The sons of Rama, the son of Dashrath. They were born in the hermitage of the sage of Vālmiki, and were brought up there. The sage Vālmiki educated them in all arts. Both of them were very brave. After the royal horse sacrifice of Rama, the sage Vālmiki consigned them to their father's care and then Rama with his wife Sita and the children returned to Ayodhya.

KUNTI

The daughter of king Shur of the line of the Yādavas. She was adopted by King Kuntibhoja. She was the wife of Pandu. In her girlhood she had obtained *mantras* (charms) from the sage Durvās by which she could beget sons and so became the mother of Karna, Dharma, Bhima and Arjuna. They were portions of the four gods, the sun, Yama (the god of death), the wind, and Indra respectively. She gave two of her charms obtained from Ashvinikumār to her rival Mādri to whom two sons Nakul and Sahadev were born.

KUMBHAKARNA

The younger brother of Rāvana. He was very brave, and had an enormous person. He used to sleep for six months and was awake for one day only. He was killed by Rama.

KURMA AVATĀR

The second *avatār* of Vishnu. Vishnu assumed this *avatār* in order to support Mountain Mandār which was used as the churn at the time of churning the ocean.

KRISHNA

The son of Vasudev and Devaki, Kansa's cousin, the son of the maternal uncle of the Pandavas and the eighth *avatār* of Vishnu. Out of fear of Kansa, his father Vasudev

stealthily took him to Gokul to Nanda who brought him up. He performed many wonderful things in Gokul in his childhood. He killed many giants who were sent by Kansa and in the end Kansa also. He was a great friend of Arjuna. Troubled by Kālayavan he forsook Mathura and founded the town of Dwāraka on the sea. He killed Narakāsura. He had eight chief wives, Rukmini, Satya-bhāmā, etc., and 16,100 other wives besides. He went to the Kauravas as an ambassador from the Pandavas for reconciliation but failed in his attempt. He was given the highest place of honour in the royal sacrifice of King Dharma for which Shishupāl censured him; so he killed Shishupāl. He was the charioteer of Arjuna in the great Indian Civil War (between the Pandavas and Kauravas). He was an expert in soul-knowledge, explaining the *Bhagavadgītā* to Arjuna and soul-knowledge to Uddhava. He was killed by a hunter named Jarā. *Vide Appendix II pp. 424-429.*

KAIKEYI

The youngest wife of King Dashrath (Rama's father), mother of Bharat, and the daughter of the king of the country of Kaikeya. Incited by her maid Mantharā at the time of the installation of Rama as Yuvaraja, she demanded the exile of Rama and the coronation of Bharat in fulfilment of the two boons which her husband Dashrath had promised her long before. Rama therefore went into exile and grieved by his separation his father King Dashrath died.

KAUSALYA

The first wife of king Dashrath, and mother of Ramachandra.

GAJENDRA

At first king of the country of Pāndya. His name was Indradyumna.

GANIKĀ

A prostitute. She had a parrot which she taught continually to repeat 'Rama, Rama.' Thereby she also had to repeat this name of God and so attained final beatitude.

GARUD

The son of the sage Kashyapa and Vinatā; the younger brother of Aruna (the charioteer of the sun); the king of birds; also the vehicle of Vishnu. He was very powerful and brought nectar for the serpents and freed his mother from the slavery of his stepmother.

GAUTAMA

With severe austerities he brought the Godāvari river where it is. He was a great ascetic.

CHĀNUR

A great wrestler in the service of King Kansa. Krishna killed him when he had gone to Mathura with Balarām for the *Dhanuryāga*.

JATĀYU

The younger son of Aruna (the charioteer of the sun) a great friend of King Dashrath, who fought with Rāvana while he was carrying away Sita. But Rāvana skilfully contrived to cut off his wings, and left him in a dying condition. It was he who told Rama of Sita being carried away to Lanka.

JAMADAGNI

A *rishi* (sage), father of Parashurām, and the son of Richika from Satyavati the daughter of Gādhi. He was of a wrathful disposition. Once his wife was late in returning from the river for some reason so he had her killed by Parashurām. But at Parashurām's request she was again restored to life.

JĀMBUVATĪ

The daughter of Jāmbuvān, one of the eight chief wives of Krishna. She had six sons, Samba and others.

JAIMINI

A chief disciple of Vyāsa. He was the writer of the *Purvamīmāṃsa*. He was an expert in debates. He was the author of the *Jaimini Ashvamedha*.

TĀRĀMATĪ

The wife of Harishchandra of the solar race. Their son was Rohidās. She was a very dutiful wife.

TUMBARU

One of the Gandharvas born from Prādhā. Rambhā was his wife.

TRIPUR

The three sons of Tarakāsura obtained from Brahma the boon of three invulnerable cities. They were made of gold, silver and iron and rotated in the space on the sky and on the earth. The collection of these three is called Tripur. Shankar burned them and therefore he is called Tripurāri.

DATTA OR DATTĀTREYA

The son of Atri and Anasuyā. (See under *Anasuyā*).

DAMAYANTI

The daughter of King Bhima of the country of Vidarbha and as the wife of King Nala very dutiful.

DASHRATH

The son of King Aja of the Ikshvāku solar race, and the father of Rama. He had three wives, Kausalya, Sumitrā and Kaikeyi, but was without any issue. With the advice of his family guru Vashishtha he performed a son-giving

sacrifice, through the *Rishi* Rishyasbringa. Then four sons were born. From Kausalya Rama, from Sumitrā Lakshmana and Shatrughna, and from Kaikeyi, Bharat. He loved his sons very much. Rama was as it were his very life. Kaikeyi was his most beloved wife. Her obstinacy compelled Rama to go into the forest as an exile and King Dashrath died through mourning for his son.

DĀRUKA

The charioteer of Shri Krishna.

DURYODHAN

The eldest son of Dhritarāshtra and Gāndhārī, and an enemy of the Pāndavas. He was very skilful in mace-fighting. He devised many plans to destroy the Pāndavas. He tried to burn them in a lacquer house. He poisoned Bhima, and threw him into a river. But all his efforts proved fruitless. Finally defeating Dharma at dice he won his kingdom. He tried in an open assembly to strip Draupadi of her garment. He sent the Pāndavas into exile for twelve years, at the end of which they had to pass one year *incognito*. During this time he sent the sage Durvās to persecute them, and by carrying away the cows of King Virāta he tried to force them out of their disguise but he did not succeed. After the period of thirteen years Shri Krishna on behalf of the Pāndavas went to Duryodhan to bring about a reconciliation between him and the Pāndavas, but Duryadhan insulted Shri Krishna by telling him that he would not give to the Pāndavas even as much earth as would cover the point of a needle. He hid himself in the deep water of a pond after the death of his commanders Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Shalya and others during the great Indian Civil War. Bhima went to the pond, and challenged him to fight. He struck him on the thigh with his mace which made him

senseless. Duryodhan then appointed Ashvatthāmā as the commander and he at dead of night killed all the warriors of the Pāṇdavas such as Dhṛiṣṭadyumna, etc., while they were asleep. Duryodhan died cheerfully when he heard this.

DURVAS

A *rishi*, son of Atri and Anasuyā. He had given to Kunti (the mother of the Pāṇdavas) at an early age, five *mantras* (charms) to beget as many sons. He was very wrathful. Once Duryodhan sent him to the Pāṇdavas and asked him to demand from them at midnight a dinner for him and his thousand disciples with a view to humiliate them. He went but was defeated in his attempt on account of the cooking pan which the sun had given to Draupadi producing any kind of food when required.

DUSSHĀSAN

One of the hundred sons of Dhṛitarāshtra, and the younger brother of Duryodhan. Like Duryodhan he was a brave and powerful warrior but was very wicked. He tried to strip Draupadi of her garment, and so Bhima vowed to kill him and drink his blood, a vow Bhima fulfilled in the great Indian Civil War.

DRAUPADI

The daughter of King Drupad, and wife of the Pāṇdavas. She was born from a sacrificial fire. In her *swayamvar* (choosing of husband ceremony), Arjun killed the fish on the target and won her. As soon as Kunti said the prize should be divided equally she became the wife of all the five and also lost her liberty along with the Pāṇdavas at the game of dice. When Duryodhan through Dushshāsan tried to strip her of her garment in the open royal court Shri Krishna provided her with innumerable garments and thus preserved her modesty. In her life of

retirement she lived under the name of Sairandhri as the handmaid of Queen Sudeshnā. She was a most virtuous, noble and dutiful wife.

DHARMA OR DHARMARĀJA

The eldest son of King Pandu, and born to Kunti by the *mantra* (charm) of Yamadharma. He was extremely god-fearing and kind towards all beings and so was called *Ajātashatru* (one without an enemy). He was a great lover of truth, and even in times of adversity he did not swerve from it, although he was sharply reproached by Bhima and others. When first the plans of the Kauravas for the destruction of the Pāndavas were frustrated, King Dhritarāshtra gave him half of his kingdom. Afterwards he made conquests in all quarters of the world with the help of his brothers and with the fortune thus amassed he performed a royal horse sacrifice. This made Duryodhan jealous of him. He was very fond of gambling. Taking advantage of this Duryodhan gambled and cunningly defeated him, taking all his kingdom and sending him into exile. In the year of his life *incognito* he stayed at the court of Virāta as a player of dice assuming the name Kanka. He tried his best to make peace with Duryodhan but was unsuccessful. He defeated the Kauravas after his return from exile and ascended the throne. When Drona, lying on his deathbed of arrows, asked him whether it was Ashvattāmā his son or elephant that was dead, Dharma replied that he did not know and so Drona forsook his bow. This was the only time in his life when he did not speak the truth. He performed a horse-sacrifice and ruled well. In the end, he seated Parikshiti on the throne and with his four brothers and Draupadi went into the Himalayas to perform austerities. An era named Yudhisthira was started in his name after him.

DHRITARĀSHTRA

Grandson of Shantanu in the lineage of Puru. Born

to Vyās through Ambikā, a wife of Vichitravirya. He was blind from birth, and therefore his brother Pandu received the kingdom. He had a hundred sons (one being Duryodhan) and one daughter. His wife was Gāndhāri. He also had a son named Yuyutsu born from a Vaishya woman. When Duryodhan, Shakuni and others lied and did other wicked things to destroy the Pāndavas he never forbade them. When finally all his sons died in battle he lived with Dharmarāja for fifteen years. During that period he was always vexed by Bhima with curt remarks which disgusted him and so he became an ascetic and went to the Himalayas, taking with him Gāndhāri and Kunti, and there they all died.

DHRUVA

The son of king Uttānapād and Suniti. His stepmother insulted him in his childhood and through anger he left his father, went into the jungle and performed severe austerities. Vishnu was pleased with these and so He gave him an eternal place.

NAKULA

The son of King Pandu and Madri, and fourth of the Pāndavas. He was a portion of the *Ashvinikumars*, the heavenly physicians, and was extremely handsome. He conquered the west. In his retirement he lived with King Virāta under the name of Granthik and was in charge of his horses.

NANDA

The chief of Gokul. He was a great friend of Vasudev. His wife was Yashodā. He brought up the brothers Balarāma and Krishna from their infancy.

NANDI

The bull of Shiva. His vehicle. The son of the wish-cow. His form is that of a human being except the head which is that of a monkey. He has short

NALA

The king of the country of Nishadha the son of Virasen, and the husband of Damayanti. He was very handsome, truthful and an expert in the knowledge of horses. His brother Pushkar won from him in gambling all his royal fortune and drove him into the forest. One night Nala abandoned his wife in the forest in the hope that she would go and live with her parents and not suffer with him. She first went to King Chedi, then to her father when he came to know of her whereabouts. Nala then took refuge with King Rituparna of Ayodhya. When Damayanti knew it she invited Rituparna to Kundinpur to the choosing of her husband a second time and Nala accompanied him as his charioteer. Nala and Damayanti recognized each other and again lived together. From Rituparna Nala learnt the art of gambling and then won back his kingdom from Pushkar.

NAKRA

A divine chorister Huhu by name. Through the curse of a *rishi* he had become a crocodile; but along with Gajendra was saved by Vishnu.

NĀRAD

A famous celestial *rishi* (sage). He was one of the seven sons produced by the will of Brahmadev. He performed the song-service of Hari (God) and his favourite musical instrument was the *Vinā*. He was very fond of picking quarrels. He had access to the three worlds, viz., the heaven, the mortal world and the nether regions.

NRISINHA

The fourth principal *avatār* of Vishnu. In form he was half man and half lion, hence his name *Nrisinha* (lion-man.) He killed Hiranyakashipu, and protected Pralhād.

PARASHURĀM

The son of the *Rishi* Jamadagni and the sixth principal *avatār* of Vishnu. King Kārtavīrya took away the cow of Jamadagni, and so Parashurām killed him. Kārtavīrya's sons killed Jamadagni in vengeance for the death of their father. On this Parashurām vowed to annihilate the Kshatriyas; and on twenty-one occasions he rid the earth of all the Kshatriyas, doing this as a gift to Kashyap; and creating a new country near the sea-coast he lived there. This country is the modern Konkan. He was deprived of his divine power by Rama (son of Dasharath) as he acted disrespectfully towards him. By the command of his father he beheaded his mother. Bhishma, his disciple, had once defeated him in battle.

PĀNDAVAS

The sons of Pandu born from his two wives Kunti and Mādri. They were Yudhisthira (or Dharma), Bhima, Arjun, Nakul and Sahadev. Each is called a Pāndava.

PĀRVATI

Sati the wife of Shiva, who having abandoned her body in the sacrifice performed by Daksha was reborn as the daughter of the Himalaya mountains and so received the name Pārvati; other names Haimawati, Girija, etc have the same sense.

PULASTYA

The will-born son of Brahmadev. His wife was Havirbhuvā. He had two sons by name of Agastya and Vishravā.

PUTANĀ

A demoness sent by Kansa to nurse Krishna with her poisoned breasts and thus kill him. But Krishna sucked up the poison and killed her.

PRALHĀD

The eldest of the four sons of Hiranyakashipu born from Kayādhū. While he was in his mother's womb he became a devotee of God by hearing the discourses of Nārada. As he was a born *bhakta* of Vishnu his father persecuted him very much. At last Vishnu assumed the *avatār* of Narasinha and killed his father, and thus protected him.

BALI

The grandson of Pralhād, and son of Virochana, and the father of Bānāsura. He performed a sacrifice on the north bank of the Nerbada river in Bhṛigukachcha. There Vishnu went in the form of a dwarf Brahman *Vāmana* and begged of Bali a gift of three paces; with two paces he occupied the heaven and the mortal world and with the third sent Bali to the lower regions. Vishnu became his doorkeeper to make amends to him. He (Bali) is deathless.

BIBHISHAN

The brother of Rāvana. He remonstrated with his brother for kidnapping Sita and advised him to return her to her husband. Rāvana did not like the advice, so Bibhishan went over to the side of Rama. On the death of Rāvana, Rama seated him on the throne of Lanka (Ceylon). He is deathless.

BUDDHA

Founder of Buddhism. His original name was Shākyasinha. He was born at Kapilvastu. He is regarded as the ninth *avatār* of Vishnu.

BHAGIRATH AND BHĀGIRATHI

Bhagirath, the great-great-grandson of King Sagar. He performed severe austerities and brought the heavenly Ganges to the mortal world to save his sixty thousand ancestors, the sons of Sagar who lay in the form of ashes

under the curse of the *Rishi* Kapil. Having been brought by King Bhagirath, the Ganges is called the Bhāgirathi. *Vide Appendix II p. 432.*

BHARAT

The son of Dasharath born to him from Kaikeyi. He loved Rama very much, and therefore went to the forest to request Rama to come back to Ayodhya to reign, but Lord Ramachandra did not come. Then Bharat kept the sandals of Rama on the throne, and for fourteen years reigned in his name, and when Rama returned from his exile gave him his kingdom.

BHASMĀSUR

A demon created by God Shiva from a lump of holy ashes. He was given the boon that the person on whose head he kept his hand would be turned to ashes. He began to trouble each and every person and so Vishnu took the form of a beautiful young damsel called Mohini and caused Bhasmāsura to keep his hand on his own head and thus turned him to ashes.

BHIMA

The second of the Pāndavas and born to Kunti from the *mantra* (charm) given her by God (the wind). Even as a boy he was very powerful and even in play threatened Duryodhan and others. He learned the art of wielding the mace from Balarām, Krishna's brother. He had the strength of ten thousand elephants. He killed many demons such as Baka, Hidimb, Jarāsandh and Kichak. He lived with king Virāt in his retirement as Ballav, and was in charge of the royal kitchen. He killed all the hundred sons of king Dhritarāshtra, viz., Duryodhan, Dussāsana, etc.

BHĪMAK

The ruler of Vidarbha, known also as Bhishmak. He was the father of Rukmi.

BHISHMA

The son of King Shantanu of the lunar race born to him from the river Ganges. At the desire of his father he vowed not to claim the throne and remained a bachelor till death. His father was pleased with his vow, and gave him the boon that he would die at will. He was a disciple of Parashurām but had defeated him once. When Arjun hit him in battle from behind Shikhandi he lay on a bed of arrows till the sun entered the summer solastices and then died. After the war (the Indian Civil War) he preached Dharmarāj (the duties of a king) and about religion.

BHRIGU

A Brahman *rishi* (sage), the will-born son of Brahmadev, of the line of Jamadagni. Once there was a dispute among the *rishis* as to who was the highest amongst the three gods, Brahma, Shankar (Shiva) and Vishnu. Bhrigu, who was sent to decide, treated Brahma and Shiva disrespectfully for which they were angry with him. Lastly he went to Vishnu, but finding him asleep he kicked him on His chest. This did not anger Vishnu, and this test made Vishnu the highest of the three. The mark of this kick is called the *Shrivatsa*. *Vide Appendix II p. 432.*

MADHU AND KAITABHA

Demons born from the dirt of the ear of Vishnu and whom Vishnu killed.

MATSYA (the fish *avatār*)

Vishnu became a fish in order to kill a demon called Hayagriva who intended to steal away the Vedas from Brahmadeva when he slept at the end of the *Kalpa*.

MĀRUTI

The son of Anjani, a female monkey and the wind. As a loyal servant of Rama he crossed the ocean and in

Lanka (Ceylon) found Sita. He was extremely powerful and ever celibate and one without death. Rama being greatly delighted taught him the knowledge of Brahma. *Vide Appendix II p. 422.*

MITRAVINDĀ

The daughter of Jayasena, King of Avanti. Krishna carried her away from her *Svayamvara* (choice of a husband ceremony) and married her. She was one of the eight chief wives of Krishna.

MUCHUKUND

He was much fatigued on account of his assisting the gods in their battles and the gods insisted on his taking rest. He asked for a boon of the gods for a secluded place to sleep in and that the man who tried to awaken him should meet with death as soon as his eyes fell on him, while he himself should have a *darshan* (vision) of Vishnu. Krishna cleverly caused Kālyavan to disturb his sleep and by him he was burned to ashes.

MENAKĀ

A heavenly damsel. She interrupted the austerities of Vishvāmitra who was attracted towards her and from her Shakuntalā was born.

YASHODĀ

The wife of Nand the chief of Gokul. She brought up Krishna.

YADNYAJITI

One of the chief eight wives of Krishna.

RAMA

The son of King Dasharath and Kausalya, and the seventh *avatār* of Vishnu. He was an expert archer and when Vishvāmitra took him from Dasharath to protect his

sacrifice, he slew several demons, went to Mithilā (the capital of Janak), and there broke the bow of Shiva in two and thus won Sita as his wife. Parashurām came to fight with him for breaking Shankar's bow but Rama defeated him. Dasharath meant to give Rama the kingdom but Rama was sent into exile for fourteen years in fulfilment of his stepmother's (Kaikeyi's) previous boon from Dasharath. In his forest life his wife was kidnapped by Rāvana the king of Ceylon. While wandering in search of Sita he met Hanumān, Sugriva and other monkey chiefs and made friends with them. He crossed the sea by building a bridge, killed Rāvana, and then returned with Sita to Ayodhya and ascended the throne of his father. He had only one wife, used only one arrow and was true to his word. He had two sons, Kusha and Lava. In the forest by the touch of his foot, he restored to life Ahalya who had been cursed by her husband and was lying in a petrified state.

[Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E., I.C.S. (retired), gives the following summary in volume 1, page 87, of *The Encyclopædia Of Religion And Ethics*:—'Rama, the prince of Ayodhya or Oudh, was banished by the king (Dasharath) his father for fourteen years, and came and lived in a forest near the sources of the Godavari, accompanied by his wife Sita and his younger brother Lakshman. During the absence of the two brothers from their cottage, Sita was taken away by Ravana, King of Ceylon. After long search Rama got news of Sita, and determined to cross over from India to Ceylon with a vast army of monkeys and bears to recover her. It was for this purpose that the causeway across the ocean (Adam's Bridge, or *Ramasetu*, Rama's Causeway) is said to have been constructed. Rama crossed over with his army, defeated and killed Ravana, recovered his wife, and returned to Oudh. The

period of exile had expired; Rama's father was dead; and Rama ascended the throne.' Dr. Arthur Anthony Macdonell, who was Boden Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, in the article *Ramayana* in volume 1 of *The Encyclopædia Of Religion And Ethics*, attempted an estimate of this great Sanskrit epic of ancient India, in which he distinguished two parts: 'the first an ordinary narrative of human life without any admixture of mythological elements, beginning with the intrigues of a queen (Rama's stepmother Kaikeyi) at the court of Ayodhya to ensure the succession of her son (Bharata) to the throne.... Had the poem ended with the return of Rama's brother Bharata to Ayodhya after the death of their father, King Dasharath,' it might have passed for an epic based on historical events. But the second part has many mythological, and possibly allegorical, elements.]

J. F. E.

RĀVANA

The King of Lankā (Ceylon). Mandodari the daughter of Māyāsura was his wife. He obtained various boons from Brahmādev with his severe penance. He had imprisoned all the gods and made them his slaves. From Kuber the treasurer of the gods he had obtained the *Pushpak vimāna* (aeroplane). Bibhishana was his brother. He had kidnapped Sita, Rama's wife. So Rama besieged his city defeated and killed all the Rakshasas including Rāvana and rescued Sita. Rāvana had ten heads and was therefore called Dashamukha. He was a great devotee of Shiva, divided the Vedas in parts, and explained the syllables of the Vedas. He initiated the three methods of the study of the Vedas, viz. *Krama*, *Ghana* and *Jatā*.

RAMBHĀ, URVASHI, TILOTTAMĀ

Heavenly damsels.

RUKMĀNGAD

A great devotee of Vishnu, and a strict observer of Ekādashi (the eleventh day of every fortnight).

RUKMINI

The daughter of King Bhishmak of Vidarbha and Krishna's chief wife. It had at first been decided that she be given to Shishupal, but on account of her love for Krishna, she wrote him a secret letter asking him to take her away. So Krishna deceived everybody, defeated Rukmi and the other kings and carried her away. She had a son by name Pradyumna. When the Yadavas were all destroyed she burnt herself. *Vide Appendix II pp. 426-428.*

RUKMI

The son of Bhishmak of Vidarbha and the elder brother of Rukmini. He hated Krishna and wanted to marry Rukmini to Shishupal. A battle was fought between him and Krishna but he was defeated. Later Balarām, Krishna's brother, killed him.

RENUKĀ

The mother of Parashurām (wielder of an axe) and wife of Jamadagni. Because on one occasion when she saw Chitraratha Gandharva sporting with his wives, her passions were roused, her son Parashurām, at the desire of his father, killed her.

LAVA

The younger son of Rama and the younger brother of Kusha. (See under *Kusha*).

LAKSHMAN

The son of King Dasharath and his wife Sumitrā. He loved Rama very much and accompanied him into his exile. He killed Indrajit, the son of Rāvana.

LAKSHMANĀ

One of the eight favourite wives of Krishna.

LAKSHMĪ

The wife of Vishnu. The story goes that she was churned out of the ocean.

VARĀHA (BOAR)

The third *avatār* of Vishnu. He came out of the nostrils of Brahmadev, killed the demon Hiranyāksha and saved the earth by holding it on his tusk.

VASHISHTHA

A great Brahman *rishi* (sage), the son of Mitrāvaruna. He had a wish-cow which Vishvāmitra demanded but the cow was unwilling to go. When he used force, from her body she produced various kinds of soldiers and extirpated the army of Vishvāmitra. So they became enemies. To gain such spiritual power as that of Vashishtha, Vishvāmitra practised severe austerities. Because Vishvāmitra was a Kshatriya, Vashishtha would not acknowledge him as a Brahman sage though everyone else did. So Vishvāmitra killed his hundred sons. But when he really acquired that worth he was accepted by Vashishtha as a Brahman sage. *Vide Appendix II p. 431.*

VĀMAN (DWARF)

The fifth *avatār* of Vishnu. In order to help Indra he sent Bali to the lower regions. (See under the word *Bali*)

VĀLMĪKI

The well-known writer of the great epic *Rāmāyana*. While going to practise austerities he was abandoned by his parents in a forest. *Kirātas* (forest hunters) took him and brought him up as a robber. He became clever at archery and once when going to kill a sage he asked him to go and ask his wife and children if they

would share his nefarious deeds. Being convinced that they would not, he repented and practised severe austerities by repeating the two letters in the word 'Rama' in the reverse order until he was enveloped by *valmik* (an ant-hill) and therefore he was called Vālmiki. Once moved through pity he cursed a hunter who had killed a pair of *kraunch* birds. The curse was in the form of a couplet which came naturally from his lips. Brahmādev asked him to compose the *Rāmāyana*. When Rama abandoned Sita in the forest he took care of her and when Kusha and Lava were born he educated them and sent them all to Rama.

VIDUR

The son of a female slave of Ambikā, the wife of Vichitravirya, the father of Dhritarāshtra. He was begotten by Vyāsa, the well-known writer of the *Puranas*. He was very righteous, unblinded, of right judgment and wise. He advised Dhritarāshtra not to hate the Pāndavas, and to let them have their share in the kingdom, but his advice was disregarded. He put the Pāndavas on their guard as they were about to be burnt in the lacquer house especially created for their destruction by their cousins the Kauravas. He had gone to perform pilgrimages when the battle took place between the two parties. After the battle he went to live in a forest and died there. *Vide Appendix II p. 429.*

VISHVAKARMA OR TVASHTA

The architect of the gods.

VISHVĀMITRA

The son of King Gādhi of the lunar race. Although a born Kshatriya, by his severe austerities he became a Brahman *rishi* (sage). He had many sons including Yādnyavalkya. He hated Vashishtha. In order to interrupt him in his austerities Indra sent Menakā a heavenly

damsel. She accomplished her purpose and from her Shakuntalā was born to him. Because the gods refused to admit King Trishanku with his mortal body into heaven, Vishvāmitra created a separate world for his (Trishanku's) residence. (See under *Vashishtha*, p. 418 & *Appendix II* p. 431.)

VYĀSA

Son of Pārāshara from Satyavati born in her maidenhood. He made the divisions in the *Vedas*. He wrote the *Mahābhārata*. From him were born to Vichitravirya's wives Dhritarāshtra and Pandu, and Vidur from a slave of Ambikā. He is also known as Dvaipāyan, Krishna-dvaipayan, etc.

SHAKUNI

The son of King Subal of the country of Gāndhār, the brother of Gāndhārī, the wife of Dhritarāshtra, and Duryodhan's maternal uncle. He induced Duryodhan to gamble with Dharma. He was an expert deceitful gambler. He was killed by Sahadev.

SHABARI

A female Bhil, and the maid of the sage of Mātang who lived near the Pampā lake. She was a great devotee of Rama.

SHATRUGHNA

The son of King Dasharath of his second wife Sumitrā. He killed Lavanāsura. While Rama led the life of an exile he reigned in his name like Bharat. He founded the country of Shurasen and made Mathurā its capital.

SHISHUPĀL

The son of Damaghosha, and Vasudev's sister's son, and the king of the country of Chedi. Rukmini was his betrothed wife, but Krishna took her away and after that

he became Krishna's enemy. At the royal sacrifice of the Pāṇdavas, Krishna was given the first honour, therefore he (Shishupāl) insulted Krishna, and the latter killed him.

SHUKA

Son of Vyāsa. He was a born philosopher and a celibate till death. Rambhā a heavenly damsel was frustrated in her attempt to seduce him. Vyāsa taught him the *Bhāgavata*, and he read it to King Parikshiti.

SHUKRA

The son of the *Rishi* (Sage) Bhrigu and Pulomā. He was the preceptor of the *Dāityas* (demons). His daughter was Devayāni born from his wife Jayanti, the daughter of Indra.

SANAK

One of the first will-born sons of Brahmadev. Sanat-kumār, Sanatsujat, and Sanandan were his brothers. All of them were expert in the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit.

SAHADEV

The fifth and last of the Pāṇdavas, Mādri's son was very beautiful. Was very skilful in sword-fight, and was a great astrologer. In his retirement he was in charge of the cattle of King Virāt.

SAHASRĀRJUN

The son of Kritavirya of the Yadu line, and therefore was called Kārtavirya. He had a thousand arms. He had obtained them as a boon of the god Dattātreyā. His capital was Māhishmati. He took away the wish-cow of the father of Parashurām who therefore killed him. He ruled justly.

SANJAYA

The son of a charioteer by name of Gavalgana. He was the charioteer and adviser of King Dhritarāshtra. Through the favour of Vyās he was able to understand all that

happened in the war just from where he sat, and he explained the same to King Dhritarāshtra.

SATYAVATI

The daughter of Uparichara born from a fisherwoman. She was also known as Matsyagandhā, Yojangandhā, and Gandhavati. Before she was married, Vyāsa was born to her from the *Rishi* (Sage) Parāshar. Afterwards she was married to King Shantanu, and had from him two sons, Chitrāngad and Vichitravīrya.

SATYABHĀMA

One of the eight chief wives of Krishna, the daughter of Satrājīt. After the death of Krishna she burnt herself on his funeral pyre. *Viñe Appendix II p. 426*

SATYAVĀN

The son of Dyumatsen of the country of Shālva. He was also known as Chitrāshva. He was the husband of Savitri, the daughter of King Ashvapati and through her power he became long-lived although destined to die early.

SATRĀJIT

The eldest grandson of King Anamitra of the Satvat race of the Yadu family line. He gave his daughter Satyabhāma to Krishna. He was killed by Shatadhanva.

SĀVITRĪ

Daughter of King Ashvapati of the Madra country. Wife of Satyavān and famous as a dutiful wife. Born as the fruit of eighteen years' worship of the goddess of the same name. Savitri was a child of wondrous beauty and lustre and hence no prince dared to wed her but at last after wandering in various countries at her father's suggestion she herself chose Satyavān in marriage. Though Nārād the *Rishi* told her that Satyavān would be short-lived, she nevertheless remained loyal to her choice. After her

marriage she rendered the highest service to her mother-in-law, father-in-law and husband. Going into the forest with her husband on the appointed day of his death, she followed Yama (the god of death) as he was taking her husband away, saying ' Wherever the husband goes, there goes the wife also. ' She followed singing the praises of Yama, and finally obtained the threefold boon, viz., that her blind father-in-law should receive sight, that to her father and herself should be granted a hundred sons, and that her husband should return to her.

SĀNDIPANI

The son of a sage by name of Kāshya. He lived in Avanti, the modern Ujjain. Krishna and Balarām learned from him all sciences and arts including the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. Kuchail (or Sudāmā) was also studying there. As an honorarium to their *guru*, Balarām and Krishna brought back to life the dead sons of their *guru*, and then went to their home.

SITĀ

The heroine of the *Rāmāyana* and the adopted daughter of Siradhvaja Janaka who found her while ploughing the ground. The breaking of the Shiva-bow was the condition to be fulfilled by the man who should become the husband of Sitā. Rama broke it, and Sitā became his wife and was a model of a faithful wife. She followed him in his exile. While Rama was away, Rāvana kidnapped her and tried hard to induce her to yield to his sensual wishes but she did not. After her rescue from Rāvana, Rama would not admit her to his house, so she threw herself into the fire and came out of the test safe and sound. After the accession of Rama on the throne she was great with child, but Rama abandoned her on account of the calumnious language which a washerman used in connection with her, and she took refuge with the *Rishi* (Sage) Vālmiki in

the forest. There Kusha and Lava were born to her. Vālmiki taught them the *Rāmāyana* and everything that was fit to be learnt by Kshatriya children. He sent all the three to Rama, and convinced him of Sitā's purity, but she instantly disappeared in the earth. (See under the name *Rama* for other details.)

SUDĀMA

A poverty-stricken Brahman, Krishna's school-fellow. Persuaded by his wife he went to Krishna with a handful of parched rice. Krishna was pleased on seeing him and raised him to a great and a glorious life.

SUMITRĀ

The daughter of Shur, king of Magadha. The second wife of King Dasharath, and the mother of Lakshman and Shatrughna.

HAYAGRIVA

A demon who tried to carry away the *Vedas* from Brahmadev. But Vishnu took the Matsya (fish) *avatar* and killed him. This *avatar* is also known as Hayagriva, hence an epithet of Vishnu.

HARISHCHANDRA

A king of the Ikshvaku family line, and the eldest son of King Trishanku. Vashishtha praised him in the court of Indra, and therefore Vishvāmitra tried various means to test his goodness, but he bravely endured every test.... One of the most memorable incidents of the entire narrative about Harishchandra describes the moment when his Dom master commanded him to slay his wife Tara-mati, and her last prayer was: 'In every birth let there be a king like Harishchandra, a son like Rohitha, a *guru* (preceptor) like Vashishtha, and a beggar like Vishvāmitra.' (Abbreviated from the *Abhinava Bhaktavijaya* account, pp. 673-674.)

[This ancient king 'is said to have lived in the *Treta Yuga* or Silver Age. Many legends are recorded concerning him....He is best known for his piety and his suffering. He was a sort of Indian Job, who passed through inconceivable and undeserved woe, and had to sell even his wife [Taramati] and child [Rohith] in order to pay the dues of the rapacious saint Vishvāmītra. He finally sank to be the servant of a Dom, his duties being to collect the clothes that covered the corpses at the Benares place of cremation, and to deliver them to his master. At the climax of his sufferings in this degrading occupation, he had to steal the clothes from the corpse of his own son, which was brought thither for cremation by his mother, Harishchandra's long-parted wife. The parents resolved to end their sorrows by dying on the son's funeral pyre. The gods then intervened. His Dom master, who was really the god Dharma, or Virtue, taking human form on purpose to test Harishchandra's sense of duty, expressed himself satisfied. Harishchandra and his wife were translated to heaven, and his son was resuscitated and restored to his kingdom, where he reigned in his father's stead. The whole story is told with much pathos in the seventh and following chapters of the *Markandeya Purana*. The story also occurs in the *Pādma Purana*, and is a favourite subject of modern vernacular literature. The *Harishchandis* are nearly all of very low caste, mostly Doms. They claim to practise the tenets handed down to them from Harishchandra's Dom master; who was taught piety by his servant in the intervals of his employment. They worship Vishnu as the Creator of the universe; and if they have any other definite doctrines, they are those of the *Bhakti Marga*.*]

J. F. E.

* Dr. Sir George A. Grierson in the *Encyclopædia of Religion And Ethics*, vol. VI, page 517.

APPENDIX I

HIRANYAKASHIPU

The father of Pralhād, a great devotee of Vishnu. He pleased Brahmādev and got from Him the boon that he would not suffer death at the hands of a man or a beast at night or in daytime or on earth or in water. So Vishnu took the form of Nrisinha, half man, half beast, and killed him in the evening, a time between day and night, and under the door, that is, neither in the house nor outside.

HIRANYĀKSHA

The younger brother of Hiranyakashipu. Vishnu became *Varāha* (a boar) and killed him.

APPENDIX II

PAURANIC NARRATIVES REFERRED TO IN THE *BHAKTAVIJAYA*

AGASTI'S DRINKING THE OCEAN

Supported by the power of the demon Vritra, the demons Kālakeya often fought with Indra. When with much effort Indra killed the demon Vritra, the Kālakeya demons hid themselves in the ocean, and at night devoured the *rishis* and impeded their religious functions. Thereupon Indra and other sages prayed to Brahmadev who asked them to go to the sage Agastya. They went, and in compliance with their request the sage Agastya with his power of penance drank the ocean at a gulp, and thus the demons were destroyed.

INDRA'S THOUSAND PHYSICAL HOLES

Brahmadev gave his adopted daughter Ahalyā in marriage to the sage Gautama. Indra wished to have her for his wife as she was very beautiful, and being foiled in his attempt he resolved to enjoy her by some means or other. Once when Gautama was away from his house on account of the solar eclipse, Indra went in the disguise of Gautama to his house and enjoyed Ahalyā. Just then the real Gautama returned, found out Indra, and cursed him saying, 'You will have a thousand holes in your body.' Ahalyā too was cursed and turned into a slab of stone. When appeased by her and the gods he again said that she would be restored to life by the dust of the feet of Rama, and that Indra would have a thousand eyes.

A HUNTER BITTEN BY A SNAKE WHILE IN THE ACT OF SHOOTING BIRDS

While wandering in a forest to secure some game a hunter beheld a male and a female pigeon on a tree. He

aimed his arrow at them, but in the meantime a hawk noticed the two birds and intended to pounce upon them. The birds were thus between two fires, and they prayed to God to save them and a wonderful thing occurred. A snake came out of its hole and bit the hunter, so the arrow he had aimed at the birds hit the hawk instead, and thus the two birds were saved, and they thanked God.

KRISHNA SHOWS HIS INNUMERABLE FORMS TO COWHERDESSES

One day a cowherdess caught Krishna while stealthily eating butter in her house, and notwithstanding his prayers she dragged him to his adopted mother Yashodā; on the way many cowherdresses joined her. As they saw Krishna's mouth smeared with butter they all exclaimed, 'The robber is well caught. Now we shall have him punished soundly by Yashodā.' All then started to go to Yashodā to complain against Krishna, and when Krishna found his escape impossible, he performed a miracle. Every cowherdess had in her hand a Krishna with his mouth smeared with butter, and every cowherdess had in her hand a pot of curds as she was going to complain to Yashodā. In the meantime another Krishna was playing in the yard of Yashodā with other cowherds. Just then Nanda arrived there with his relatives, and each of them was carrying a Krishna in his hand. In this way when the cowherdresses found all space filled with Krishna they were amazed and forgetting their complaint went away.

KRISHNA TAKES THE FORMS OF COWS AND CALVES

Once on a time Brahmadev wanted to see whether or no Krishna was a perfect *avatār* of God and he therefore carried away all the cows, calves, cowherds, etc., into his own land, the *Satyaloka*. Krishna knew this and for a whole year he took their forms and everything seemed as

usual. After the end of a year he (Brahmadev) being convinced, went to Nanda and returned the real cows, calves and cowherds, and the ones that were acting in their stead immediately disappeared. All were astonished at this miracle.

THE SLAYING OF THE SERPENT KĀLIYĀ

In a deep place in the waters of the Jumna river there lived a very venomous serpent by name Kāliyā and all the water of the river on his account had become poisonous. Some cowherds drank it and died at once, at which Krishna was much enraged; in order to punish Kāliyā he jumped into the river and straightway entered his house. His wives, as they saw the tender form of Krishna, began to persuade him to leave the place at once and not fall a victim to the anger of the serpent who would kill him. But notwithstanding their entreaty he began to play his fife. At its sound Kāliyā coiled himself around Krishna, and tried to suffocate him to death. But Krishna swelled His body enormously so that Kāliyā's bones were broken and in an agony of death he uncoiled himself. In the meantime Krishna jumped on his head and began to play His fife and to dance. Kāliyā began to pant in distress and supplicated Krishna. His wives also pleaded with Krishna for their husband's life and Krishna spared his life on condition that he leave the place and resort to the ocean. Krishna came out and consoled those who were lamenting for Him as dead, and restored to life all the cowherds who had lost their lives on account of the poison of the serpent.

KRISHNA AND THE WIVES OF THE RISHIS

When the *rishis* knew of the various sports which Krishna played with the cowherdesses, a sort of disrespect about Him arose in their minds, as they thought that defilement would thereby spread everywhere. Understand-

ing this, and in order to explain Himself to them, he went to them and asked for food saying that he was hungry. They replied that no food could be given Him unless it was first offered to the fire, and thus sent Him away. Then Krishna sent some of His companions to the wives of the *rishis* to beg for food. As they had heard of His many sports, they had great regard for Him and thought him to be the divine soul and without the knowledge of their husbands they prepared many dainty dishes and took them to Krishna. Seeing their devotion He was much pleased and giving them His blessing He sent them away with His assurance of impunity. One of those wives was caught by her husband as she was going to Krishna. She was brought back and tied to a post, and died while being beaten by her husband. The other *rishi's* not seeing their wives in their houses went to Krishna, but to their astonishment found that they had already left the place, except the one who had died owing to her husband's beating. All had seen her tied to a post, and all saw her here also. This struck them as very wonderful, and they became convinced of the spiritual power and purity of Krishna. Krishna also instructed them in various ways and taught them the principle of humanity towards all creatures.

KRISHNA HUMBLER THE PRIDE OF NĀRAD

Nārad was present at the wedding of Krishna with Jāmbawanti. He was very proud of his singing, and thought there was no equal to him in that art. To humble his pride Krishna devised a plan. Said he to Nārad, 'Everything is in abundance here except singing, so it would be well if you would sing a little.' Nārad replied, 'What is the good of singing in an assembly of bears? (Jāmbawanti was the daughter of a bear, Jambawant.) It would be looked on as a matter of jest.' Then Krishna

looked at a bear and ordered it to sing. Taking the *vīna* of Nārada it sang so beautifully that all wondered. Not only so, but the singing left its effect even on the slab of stone on which the bear had been sitting, and it melted, and as the singing stopped it became solid again, and the *vīna* of Nārada stuck in it. As the singing ended, Nārada got up and began to take up his *vīna*, but it would not move. Then Krishna said, 'O king of *munis*, it will come out only if you will melt the slab by your singing. Just try.' At this Nārada was overcome with shame, and confessed that his singing was deficient and that his pride had been humbled. Then he praised Shri Krishna and requested Him to give him back his *vīna*. Krishna then ordered another bear to sing, and as it began to sing the slab melted and Nārada got his *vīna* back.

GIVING UP OF KRISHNA AS A GIFT

Satyabhāmā was very proud of her beauty, and thought that it had the power to keep Krishna under her thumb. Once when Krishna was in her mansion she said to Him, 'Rukmini does not possess so much beauty nor love nor devotion for you as I do, nevertheless you stay with her longer and love her more, which is not good. You should always stay with me.' Krishna replied, 'I love a person as much as he loves me.' Then they had a talk on other subjects and Krishna under the pretext of sleeping lay down quietly with his face covered. Just then Nārada the *muni* came there. Bhāmā offered him a seat and pleased him with her worship. In the course of conversation she said to Nārada, 'Krishna loves me exclusively, but tell me some means by which I shall be able to enjoy the same love for ever in my future births.' Nārada said in reply, 'If one gives a thing which one loves most as a gift to a Brahman, the same will one possess in the future births.' Bhāmā replied, 'I

see no better deserving to receive the gift than yourself. So you accept the gift please.' Being always ready to make fun, Nārada at once consented, and told Satya-bhāmā that just then was the most auspicious time for the gift. Bhāmā made all the preparations, and Krishna was already there. He laughed to Himself at seeing what was going on. Bhāmā told Him that she was going to offer Him as a gift to Nārada. Krishna said, 'But before you act up to Nārada's advice, you should first consult all my other wives, for if you do not, there will be great unhappiness. Think well of this.' Bhāmā replied that she had already thought of it, and worshipping Nārada in accordance with religious rites she gave Krishna to him as a gift. The delight of Nārada could not be contained. He at once took Krishna; and Bhāmā now became impatient. She entreated Nārada to leave Krishna there but Nārada took Krishna into the mansion of Rukmini who requested Krishna to sit on the sofa. But Krishna replied, 'Now I have become the property of Nārada. Without his order I cannot do anything.' As Nārada repeated what had happened, Rukmini fell into a swoon. At the news of Krishna's having been given as a gift, all His thousands of wives and his father Vasudev assembled there. Bhāmā was sent for, and when she came they all asked her, 'What right have you alone to give away Krishna as a gift?' In thus addressing her they made her miserable and all requested Nārada to give up Krishna but he would not listen. Eventually it was settled that if Nārada received Krishna's weight in gold he should leave his claim and give back Krishna. Bhāmā was also proud of her fortune, so she put Krishna in one of the scales and her ornaments in the other, but in no way would the scale with ornaments go down. She was very much dejected at heart at this, and hung down her head through shame and disappointment. All the other wives of Krishna following the example of Bhāmā

put their ornaments into the scale but with the same result. Finally all the gold in Dwārakā was put into the scale and even then the scale would not go down. At last Rukmini said, 'How can the Supreme and complete *Brahma*, Lord Shri Krishna, Who at His will can create and destroy in a moment innumerable universes, how can He be weighed against gold? He can be weighed against *bhakti* alone.' So removing all the gold she put a leaf of *tulsi* into the scale, and mentally pleaded, 'O God, consider me as your humble handmaid and preserve my shame.' Just as she finished her prayer, the scale in which Krishna had been placed flew up, and the people made joyful acclamations in the name of Shri Krishna and Rukmini. God hungers after devotion, and it was made evident that Rukmini's devotion was unexcelled. In this way Satyabhāmā's pride was humbled.

DRAUPADI RECEIVES FOUR ARMS AND ASSUMES
INNUMERABLE FORMS

In the royal sacrifice of the Pāndavas many Brahmans dined daily. After them dined the kings and then the others. Draupadi used to serve all these and when she felt wearied she looked at Shri Krishna and His glance relieved her of her weariness. Many days passed in this way. On one occasion as Draupadi was serving the kings, Krishna praised her for her hard work and she became choked with emotion at realizing that she was so much loved by Krishna. Just then the knot of her jacket became loose and her upper garment also slipped. At this critical moment Duryodhan and others asked her to serve them many things at once, and began to treat her without modesty. In her difficulty she invoked Krishna and through his favour received two more arms. With these she knotted her jacket and straightened her garment and began to serve. Just then the evil-mind-

ed men saw before each one of them a Draupadi being helped by Krishna. At this the righteous felt delighted and the evil-minded ones were put to shame, and all were convinced of the power of Draupadi's devotion to God.

KAURAVAS' ATTEMPT TO BURN THE PĀNDAVAS IN A LACQUER HOUSE

The Kauravas could not bear to see the respect given by the people to the Pāndavas on account of their good nature, learning, and modesty. They therefore asked their father, King Dhritarashtra, to order them to go to live in Vāranāvat. The house which had been prepared for them to live was stuffed with combustible things such as lac, resin, etc., and a *Yavan* Purochan by name, had been kept there with orders to set fire to it on an appointed day, and thus burn the Pāndavas to death. The Pāndavas set out to go and live at Vāranāvat, but Vidur had apprized them of the danger awaiting them by sending a secret message in a secret language, and for their escape he had also prepared a passage underground which was pointed out to them at the proper time. But Dharmarāj behaved as if ignorant of anything and was waiting for the day on which the house was to be set on fire. Dharmarāj was very generous and many people came to him and went away fully satisfied by his gifts of food and money. On the day on which the house was to be set on fire a Bhil woman had come to live there with her five sons, and she dined and slept on the spot. As Bhima had been warned beforehand, he was on his guard. At midnight the *Yavan* by name Purochan got up, but before he could set fire to the house, Bhima caught him and tied him to a post, and taking all his brothers and his mother, got out of the house by the secret passage underground. The house was then set fire to by Bhima, destroying with it Purochan the *Yavan* and the Bhil woman with her five

sons. In the morning people saw six corpses there, and all thought that the Pāṇḍavas were burned to death and therefore all lamented. When the news reached Hastinapur the people there felt very sad, and Dhritarāshtra with his sons outwardly bewailed. But after the *Svayamvar* of Draupadi (choice of her husband ceremony) the Pāṇḍavas appeared openly, and came again to live in their kingdom.

THE COMING OF THE HEAVENLY GANGES TO THE MORTAL WORLD AS BHĀGIRATHI

Bhagirath was the son of King Dilip of the line of the Ikshvakus. In order to save his ancestors, the sons of Sagar, who were sixty thousand in number burnt to ashes by the sage Kapil, he wanted bring down to the mortal world the heavenly Ganges. In order to accomplish this he practised severe austerity, and the Ganges being pleased consented to do as he wished. It came to the mortal world, and saved Bhagirath's ancestors, and since then has remained here under the name of Bhāgirathi (by which it is often known) as the result of Bhagirath's efforts.

BHARATA HUMBLER MĀRUTI'S PRIDE

In the battle between Rama and Rāvana, Lakshman fell down in a swoon by a missile hurled at him by Rāvana. To bring him to life Māruti went to bring Mount. Drona on which many efficacious herbs grew. While carrying it he felt proud of his strength. As Māruti was passing Nandigram where Bharata was reigning he saw Māruti, and taking him to be a demon shot him with an arrow which threw him on the ground. Māruti was sorry, for he thought that he would not be able to reach the place where Lakshman lay unconscious, before sunrise and therefore would not be of any help in restoring the life of Lakshman. When Māruti met Bharata he related his errand. Bharata at once put him on the tip of his arrow

which had the name 'Rama' on it and shot him to where Rama was. In this way Māruti's pride was humbled.

VISHNU HOLDS BHRIGU'S KICK (ITS MARK) ON HIS CHEST AS AN ORNAMENT

Once in an assembly of *rishis* a question arose as to who among the three gods was superior. Some favoured Brahma and some Shiva and Vishnu and the question could not be decided. So it was decided that he would be called the best of all who had forgiveness and peace of mind. Bhrigu went to Shiva and Brahma and purposely insulted them on which he was driven away by both. Lastly he went to Vishnu, but He was asleep. So Bhrigu gave Vishnu, a sharp kick on his chest, but instead of getting angry, Vishnu humbly said, 'I am sorry I was sleeping and thus could not welcome you.' This was held to prove Vishnu's superiority. The mark of Bhrigu's kick is called *Shrivatsalanchhan* and god Vishnu wears it as an ornament to show what respect he has for Brahmins.

VISHVĀMITRA'S NEW CREATION

Trishanku, a king of the Ikshvaku family line, wanted to perform a sacrifice with the help of Vishvāmitra, desiring to go to heaven with his mortal body. As Vishvāmitra was of the Kshatriya race, and the host Trishanku had become a *chāndala* (untouchable) by Vashishtha's curse, no Brahman would go to take part in the sacrifice. But with great difficulty some Brahmans did come, though the gods would not take their oblations. At length Vishvāmitra said, 'By the power of my own good actions, you go to heaven, O king'. As Vishvāmitra said this, the king began to fly up like a bird heavenward, but Indra (the chief of gods) would not allow him into heaven. Trishanku began to fall but as he was falling, Vishvāmitra said, 'Stay just there, for your sake I will create a new heaven and there I will locate you.' So Trishanku rema-

ined hanging in space and Vishvāmitra commenced a sacrifice as he had resolved and created somethinga. But Indra became frightened at it and prevailed on Vishvāmitra to stop his further creation. Indra caused Trishanku to give up his mortal body and took him to heaven with a divine body.

[VASHISHTHA AND VISHVĀMITRA, OR BRAHMAN'S
POWERFUL STICK

As Vishvāmitra was once on a hunting expedition he halted at the hermitage of Vashishtha who showed him and his army every kind of hospitality with the help of the wish-cow which he possessed. Vishvāmitra asked him to give him the cow, but when Vashishtha refused, Vishvāmitra began to drag away the cow by force, but the cow created four kinds of armies from her body and defeated him. Feeling deeply mortified he went into the Himalayas, and there practised severe austerities and obtained many weapons and missiles which he used on Vashishtha, but the latter took his *Brahma-dand* (the Brahman's stick) in his hand and assuming a huge form swallowed them.]

[Another narrative about the *Brahma-dand* reads as follows:—Once on a time there was a dispute between Vashishtha and Vishvāmitra as to their superiority, and in order to settle the question both of them went to Brahmadev. He asked them to produce some witnesses in whose presence the decision would be given. Vashishtha first went to the sun and requested him to come. The sun said that he had to give light to the earth and consequently could not come. But Vashishtha placed his *Chati* (a sanniyasi's upper garment) in the place of the sun, and told him that it would do his work until he returned. Then he went to the serpent Shesha who holds the earth on his head. There Vashishtha placed his stick (the *Brahma-stick*) which would support the earth until Shesha returned. He then went

to the moon, and in its place kept his water-gourd to work for it until it returned. Vishvāmitra could not obtain any such witnesses, and this established the superiority of Vashishtha over him.]

[VISHNU IN THE FORM OF A SWAN

Once upon a time the sages Sanak and others asked Brahmadev in the *Satyalo*ka (Brahmadev's heaven) a philosophical question. His mind was at that time otherwise engaged and so he could not answer. Just then Vishnu appeared on the scene as a swan and removed their doubts.]

APPENDIX III

WORDS WITH NUMERICAL SIGNIFICANCE USED IN THE *BHAKTAVIJAYA*

Words Under Numeral 3

Tritūp or *trividhatāp*:—the three classes of affliction, indicating their origin, seat or nature, viz., *Adhyātmik*: psychical (as sorrows, sickness), (2) *Adhūbhautik*: physical or material (as earthquake, conflagration, inundation); (3) *Adhidaivik*: from the gods or devils or fate (as injury from lightning, pestilence, blight).

Three kinds of actions:—(1) *Kāyik*=bodily, (2) *Vāchik*=verbal, (3) *Mānasik*=mental.

Tribhuvan:—three lands, viz., (1) *Svarga*, heaven, (2) *Mṛtyuloka*, mortal world, (3) *Pāṇāl*, hell, or lower regions.

Words Under Numeral 4

Four kinds of sin:—(1) bodily, (2) verbal, (3) mental and (4) *Sansargik*, contagious.

Chaturmāsya:—a period of four months, commencing from the bright 11th of *Ashāḍha* (July), and ending on the bright 11th of *Kārtik* (November).

Char avasthā:—four states: (1) *Jāgriti*, wakefulness; (2) *Swapna*, dreaming; (3) *Sushupti*, sound sleep without dreaming; (4) *Turya* or *Turiya*, simple consciousness, the state of abstraction from without and of absorption in the contemplation of one's own spirit.

Char khani:—the four classes of the animal and vegetable kingdom: (1) *Andaja*, oviparous, (2) *Jāraja*, viviparous, (3) *Svedaja*, sudoriparous, (4) *Udbhijja* ground-bursting (vegetating).

Char ashram:—The four religious orders referring to the four stages of life: (1) *Brahmacharya*, celibate life,

(2) *Grihastha*, householder, (3) *Sannyas*, abandonment of all worldly possessions and earthly affections; (4) *Vanaprastha*, forest life.

Char mukti:—The four stages of salvation: (1) *Salokatā*, residence in the heaven of a particular deity: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Devi, Indra; (2) *Samīpatā*, nearness to the deity; (3) *Sarupatā*, assimilation to the deity; (4) *Sāyujyatā*, absorption into the essence of Brahma.

Char mudra:—an air or disposition of countenance during abstract contemplation, four such are enumerated: (1) *Bhuchari*, (2) *khechari*, (3) *chachari*, (4) *agoc!ari*.

Char yuge:—Four eras: (1) *Krita*, (2) *Treta*, (3) *Dvapara* and (4) *Kali*.

Char varna:—The four castes or orders: (1) *Brahmans*, the priestly class; (2) *Kshatriyas*, the warrior race; (3) *Vaishyas*, traders; (4) *Shudras*, servants.

Char vani:—four kinds of speech:—(1) *Parā* (ear) (2) *Pashyanti* (eyes), (3) *Madhyama* (nostrils) (4) *Vaikhari* (the tongue).

Char Veda:—the four *Vedas*:—(1) the *Rig Veda*, (2) the *Yajur Veda*, (3) the *Sama Veda*, (4) the *Atharva Veda*.

Char purusharth:—The four principal objects of human life: (1) the acquisition of merit by pious and virtuous acts; (2) the pursuit of fame, riches, or power; (3) the enjoyment of the pleasures of sense; (4) the seeking and working out for final emancipation.

Words Under Numeral 5

Prana:—a vital air. Five are enumerated: (1) *Prāna*, this has its seat in the lungs preeminently, and is expressed as life or vitality; (2) *Apāna*, this has its

seat in the anus; (3) *Vyāna*, the vital air diffused throughout the body; (4) *Udāna*, the vital air that rises up the throat and passes into the head; (5) *Samāna*, that vital air which is considered essential to digestion.

Panchakannya :—the five most chaste wives, (1) *Abilyā* the wife of *Rishi* (Sage) *Gautama*, (2) *Draupadi* the wife of the five *Pāndav* brothers, (3) *Sita* the wife of *Rama* the seventh *avatar* of *Vishnu*, (4) *Tārā* the wife of *Vali* (monkey king), or of *Brihaspati*, the preceptor of the gods, (5) *Mandodari* the wife of *Rāvana* the ten-headed monster.

Pancha gandha :—(1) *Kapur*, camphor, (2) *kankol*, all spice, (3) *lavang*, clove, (4) *jayaphal*, nutmeg, (5) *supari*, betelnut.

Pancha gavya :—the five products of the cow :—(1) *gomutra*, cow's urine, (2) *gomaya*, cowdung, (3) *dudh*, cow's milk, (4) *dahi*, curds, (5) *tup*, clarified butter.

Pancha tatve or **pancha mahabhute** :—the five natural elements :—(1) *Prithvi*, the earth, (2) *Āpa*, water, (3) *Tej*, fire, (4) *Vāyu*, the wind, (5) *Ākāsha*, cavity.

Pancha tanmatra or **pancha vishaya** :—(1) *Shabda*, sound, (2) *Sparsha*, touch, (3) *Rupa*, form, (4) *Rasa*, juice, (5) *Gandha*, smell.

Pancha Pāndava :—The five *Pandav* brothers, the sons of King *Pandu* :—(1) *Dharma*, (2) *Bhima*, (3) *Arjuna*, (4) *Nakul* and (5) *Sahadev*.

Panch mahāyadnya :—The five oblation services. This presentation of food, before beginning the meal, to the gods, saints, demons, manes of ancestors, and men, is a part of a Brahman's daily course. The five terms are : (1) *Devayadnya*, (2) *Pitri-*

yadnya, (3) *Bhutayadnya*, (4) *Manushyayadnya*, (5) *Brahmayadnya*.

Panchakshari mantra :—A mystic formula of five letters.
Namas Shivaya, a bow to God Shiva.

Panchamrita :—The five nectarous substances: (1) *Paya* milk, (2) *dahi* curds, (3) *ghrita* clarified butter, (4) *madhu* honey, (5) *shakarā* sugar. In a mixture of these five elements of immortality an idol is bathed.

Panchagnisadhan :—Performance of a particularly austere devotion consisting of sitting in the midst of four fires burning northwards, southwards, eastwards, westwards, and the fifth the sun through his day's course.

Words Under Numeral 6

Shadguna :—The six attributes of God: (1) *Samagra aishvarya* all sovereignty or lordship, (2) *Samagra dharma* all goodness or excellence, (3) *Samagra yasha* all glory, majesty, or power, (4) *Samagra shri* all opulence or fulness, (5) *Samagra dnyāna* all knowledge or understanding, (6) *Samagra vairāgya* absolute exemption from desire or affection (i. e. all-dispassionateness.)

Shadras :—The six flavours or tastes: (1) sweet, (2) sour, (3) salt, (4) pungent, (5) astringent, (6) bitter.

Shadripu :—The six enemies of the soul: (1) lust, (2) anger, (3) covetousness, (4) love or affection, (5) pride, (6) envy.

Shadvarga :—A class of six vices or blemishes: (1) sexual passion, (2) anger, (3) cupidity, (4) natural affection, (5) pride, (6) jealousy or envy.

Shashthipujan :—Worship performed of *Shashthi* (Durga)

and other goddesses by a woman on the sixth day from her delivery.

Shat shastras:—The six *shastras* as ascribed to the *Rishis* (Sages) Kanad and Gautam:—the two *Nyāya*, the two *Mimāṃsa*, the *Sāṅkhya* and the *Yoga*; or according to another enumeration; *Nyāya*, *Vaisheshika*, *Mimāṃsa*, *Vedānta*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Patāñjala* (*Yoga*).

Shadurmi:—The six waves. The six excitements of the *shadripu* (six enemies), *shadurminadi* being the river agitated by these waves, viz. man, (1) *Shoka* sorrow, (2) *Moha* temptation, (3) *Jara* old age, (4) *Mṛtyu* death, (5) *Kshudhā* hunger, (6) *Pipāsā* thirst.

Shadaksharimantra:—A mystic formula of six letters, *Om Namah Shivaya*.

Shat darshanas:—The six schools of Hindu philosophy.

Words Under Numeral 7

Saptapuris:—The seven salvation-giving cities: (1) *Ayodhya* (Oudh), (2) *Mathura*, (3) *Maya*, (4) *Kashi* (Benares), (5) *Kanchi*, (6) *Avantika* (Ujjain), (7) *Dwarawati* (Dwarka).

Saptachiranjiva:—Seven ever-living persons: (1) *Ashvattama*, (2) *Bali*, (3) *Vyās*, (4) *Hanumān* (*Maruti*), (5) *Bibhishan*, (6) *Kripācharya*, (7) *Parashurām*.

Saptadhatu:—1. The seven elementary substances of the body, viz., (1) *Rasa* chyle, (2) *Rakta* blood, (3) *Mansa* flesh, (4) *Meda* fat, (5) *Mājja* marrow, (6) *Asthi* bone, (7) *Shukra* semen.

2. Seven metallic substances: (1) *Suvarna* gold, (2) *Rajata* silver, (3) *Tamra* copper, (4)

Vanga lead, (5) *Naga* tin, (6) *Tikshnaka* iron, (7) *Kansya* bell metal.

Saptapadi:—A ceremony during the solemnization of marriage, the bridegroom taking seven steps on rice with his bride; this makes the marriage irrevocable.

Saptaloka:—The seven *loka* or worlds: (1) *Bhurloka*, the earth, (2) *Rhuvārloka*, the region between the earth and the sun, the world of the *muni*, *siddhis*, etc., (3) *Svarloka*, the heaven of Indra, betwixt the sun and the polar star; (4) *Maharloka*, the sphere of the sun and luminaries; (5) *Janaloka*, the abode of the sons of Brahma, (6) *Tapoloka*, the heaven of beings mighty in *tap* or austere devotion, (7) *Satyāloka*, the heaven of Brahma and the *rishis* (sages).

Words Under Numeral 8

Ashtabhava:—the eight affections of the body considered as indications of the prevalence of *satvaguna* (the quality of goodness). These are: (1) *Stambha*, stupefaction, (2) *Sveda*, perspiration, (3) *Romancha*, erection of the hair of the body, (4) *Svarabhanga*, or *vaisvarya*, fluttering of the voice, (5) *Vepathu* or *kampa*, trembling, (6) *Vaivarnya*, change of colour for the worse, (7) *Ashrupata*, flowing of tears, (8) *Pralaya*, syncope or swooning.

Ashtavidha yoga:—the eight modes of *yoga* or self-restraint in profound contemplation: (1) *Yama*, restraint or government of the senses; (2) *Niyama*, a religious observance; (3) *Āsana*, posture or attitude; (4) *Prāṇāyāma*, breathing; (5) *Pratyāhara*, withdrawing or restraining the organs from the objects of sense; (6) *Dharanā*, suspending the breath, abstracting the mind and restraining all

mental wants; (7) *Dhyāna*, profound and abstract contemplation; (8) *Samādhi*, deep contemplation, abstracted or absorbed state.

Ashta siddhi:—The eight supernatural powers or capabilities: (1) *Animā*, infinite minuteness; (2) *Mahimā*, greatness; (3) *Garimā*, gravity; (4) *Laghimā*, lightness; (5) *Prāpti*, faculty of obtaining everything. (6) *Prākāmya*, irresistible will; (7) *Ishitva*, supremacy; (8) *Vashitva*, holding in command by magical means.

Ashtāṅg :—Eight parts of the body : (1) *Shira* the head; (2) *Vaksha* chest; (3) *Hridaya* heart; (4) *Bāhu* arms; (5) *Uru* thighs; (6) *Jangha* legs; (7) *Dhore* elbows; (8) *Padāṅgulī* toes.

Words Under Numeral 9

Navavidha bhakti :—The nine kinds of worship (of the supreme God or of an idol representing some god). These are: (1) *Shravan* hearing (the attributes, excellencies, or wondrous achievements of, as read or recited); (2) *Kirtan* reading or reciting (these attributes, etc.); (3) *Smaran* calling to mind or meditating upon (the names and perfections of); (4) *Pādasevan* washing, kneading or shampooing, etc., of the feet of; (5) *Archan* outward worship or common service, consisting in washing, anointing, presenting *naivedya* (gifts etc.); (6) *Vandan* adoration or performing *namaskār*, etc.; (7) *Dāsya* service in general in or about the temple; (8) *Sakhya* cultivating friendship or familiar intercourse with; (9) *Ātmanivedan* consecration of one's self.

Nava indriyas : nine organs :—two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, one mouth, the urethra, and the anus.

Nava ras :—the nine sentiments or passions : (1) *Shringār* love; (2) *Hāsyā* mirth; (3) *Karūṇa* pitifulness or tenderness; (4) *Raudra* anger; (5) *Vīra* heroism; (6) *Bhayānak* terror or fear; (7) *Adbhuta* astonishment or surprise; (8) *Bibhatsa* disgust; (9) *Shānta* tranquillity.

Words Under Numeral 10

Dashāṅgadhupa :—an incense composed of ten fragrant ingredients: (1) *Devadar*, (2) *Motha*; (3) *Uplata*; (4) *Chhali*; (5) *Ala*; (6) *Jula*; (7) *Nakhla* (8) *Ral*; (9) *Lakh*; (10) *Harada*.

OR

(1) *Koshttha*; (2) *Gula*; (3) *Lakh*; (4) *Haritaki*; (5) *Ral* ; (6) *Jalamasi* ; (7) *Shilaras* ; (8) *Sākhā* ; (9) *Moth*; (10) *Guggul*.

OR

(1) *Nakhla* ; (2) *Vula* ; (3) *Chandan* (sandal) ; (4) *Uda* ; (5) *Vishesh* ; (6) *Agar* ; (7) *Tup* (clarified butter) ; (8) *Kāpur* (camphors) ; (9) *Honey* ; (10) *Roses*.

Dasha avatār :—the ten principal *avatārs* of Vishnu: (1) *Matsya* fish; (2) *Kurma* tortoise; (3) *Varāha* boar; (4) *Nārasinha* half man, half lion; (5) *Vāman* dwarf; (6) *Parashurām* the axe wielder; (7) *Rama*; (8) *Krishna*; (9) *Buddha*; (10) *Kalanki*.

Ten characteristics of a Brahman :—(1) *Shama* a restraint of passions; (2) *Dama* curbing the passions; (3) *Shauch* purity; (4) *Dāna* giving; (5) *Santosha* satisfaction; (6) *Kshamā* forgiveness; (7) *Ārjava* straightforwardness; (8) *Bhakti* devotion to God; (9) *Dayā* kindness; (10) *Satya* truthfulness.

Dasha grantha :—The ten books of the Rigveda : (1) *Saṁhita* ; (2) *Brahman* ; (3) *Araṇ* ; (4) *Shiksha* ;

- (5) *Kalpa*; (6) *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar); (7) *Nigantu*; (8) *Nirukta*; (9) *Chhanda* (prosody)
(10) *Jyotiṣha* (astrology or astronomy).

Words Under Numeral 12

The twelve marks of the *gopichandan* clay :—(1) Forehead ;
(2) throat ; (3) chest ; (4) naval ; (5) right flank ;
(6) right arm ; (7) right ear ; (8) left flank ;
(9) left arm ; (10) backbone ; (11) neck ;
(12) left ear.

The twelve *Jyotirlingas* :—In the following twelve places there are temples dedicated to Shiva: (1) Kashi-vishveshwar (Benares) ; 2. Tryambakeshwar (at Trimbak near Nasik) ; 3. Rameshwar (Ceylon) ; 4. Malikarjun (Srishela, Madras Presidency) ; 5. Kedareshwar (in the Himalayas) ; 6. Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain) ; 7. Onkareshwar (Māndhata on the banks of the Narmada) 8. Ghrishneshwar (Ellor) ; 9. Nageshwar (Avandhya) 10. Somanath (in Kathiawar) ; 11. Bhimashankar (Poona District) ; 12. Vaijanath (Parali, District Thana).

Dvādashākshari mantra :—a mystic formula containing twelve letters: *Om namo bhogavate vāsudevāya*

Words Under Numeral 13

Trayodashguni vidū :—rolled betel-leaves with thirteen ingredients: (1) betel-leaves; (2) lime; (3) betel-nut; (4) catechu; (5) clove; (6) nutmeg; (7) nutmace; (8) saffron; (9) all-spice; (10) cocoonut kernel (11) camphor; (12) cardamon; (13) almond.

Trayodashākshari mantra :—a mystic formula with thirteen letters: *Shri ram jayaram jaya jaya ram.*

Words Under Numeral 14

Chavadū ratne :—The fourteen precious things obtained from the ocean on churning it; viz., (1) *Lakshmi*

(Vishnu's wife); (2) *Kaustubh* (Vishnu's ornament); (3) *Pārijatak* (the wish-tree); (4) *Surā* (wine); (5) the moon; (6) the wish-cow; (7) *Airavat* (Indra's elephant); (8) *Apsaras*, the heavenly damsels such as Rambha, Urvashi, Tilottamā, Menakā, etc. (9) a horse with seven mouths (belonging to the sun); (10) the deadly *Hālāhal* (poison); (11) Hari's (Vishnu's) *dhanu* (bow); (12) *shell*; (13) *nectar* (the drink of the gods); (14) *dhanvantari* the physician of the gods.

Chavadāve ratna:—A fourteenth precious thing is *chavadāve ratna*, a sound flogging or beating.

Chaudā vidyā:—1. The 14 divisions of science: (1-4) the four *Vedas*, (5-10) the six *angas* (grammar, prosody, astronomy, pronunciation, interpretation of usual terms, the Hindu ritual,) (11) the eighteen *Puranas*, (12) *mimāṃsā* or theology, (13) *nyaya* or logic, (14) *dharma* or law.

OR 2. (1) Spiritual knowledge, (2) chemistry, (3) music, (4) the *Vedas*, (5) astronomy or astrology; (6) grammar, (7) archery, (8) swimming, (9) logic, (10) an indecent treatise on the art of love, (11) equestrian skill or horsemanship, (12) dramatic acting; or assuming many disguises, (13) husbandry, (14) medicine.

OR 3. (1-4) The four *Vedas*, (5-8) the four minor *Vedas*, (9-14) and the six *Shāstras*.

Words Under Numeral 16

The sixteen purificatory rites: (1) *Garbhadhan* sacrifice on or before conception; (2) *Punsavan* sacrifice on vitality in the foetus; (3) *Anavlobhan* sacrifice in the third month of pregnancy; (4) *Vishmubali* sacrifice in the seventh month; (5) *Simantonnayan*

sacrifice in the fourth, sixth or eighth months; (6) *Jñānakarma*, giving the infant clarified butter out of a golden spoon before dividing the naval string; (7) *Nāmakarana*, naming the child on the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, or the 101st day; (8) *Nishkramaṇ*, carrying him out to be presented to the moon on the third lunar day of the third light fortnight; (9) *Suryavalokan*, carrying him out to be presented to the sun in the third or fourth month; (10) *Annaprashan*, feeding him with rice in the sixth or eighth month, or when he has cut teeth; (11) *Chudakarma*, tonsure in the second or third year, (12) *Upanayama*, investiture with the sacred string in the fifth, eighth, or sixteenth year; (13) *Mahānamya*, instruction in the *Gayatri* after the *mūṇj* thread ceremony (14) *Samavartana*, loosening the *mūṇja* from the loins; (15) *Vivāha* marriage; (16) *Svargarohana*, obsequies.

Shodashopachāra:—the performance of sixteen points in idol-worship: (1) *Avahana*, summoning or invoking; (2) *Asana*, offering a seat; (3) *Padya*, water for cleaning the feet; (4) *Arghya*, an oblation to gods or venerable men, of rice, *durva* (grass), and flowers with water only; in the palm of the hand or in a small vessel; (5) *Achaman*, sipping water before or after religious ceremonies or meals, from the palm of the hand; (6) *Snana*, bathing; (7) *Vastra*, offering a garment; (8) *Yadnyopavita*, the sacred thread, (9) *Gandha*, sandalwood paste; (10) *Pushpa*, flowers. (11) *Dhupa*, incense; (12) *Dipa*, light; (13) *Naivedya*, offering of some eatable; (14) *Dakshina*, offering of money; (15) *Pradakshina*, circumambulation; (16) *Mantrapushpa* the gowpen or double handful of flowers; accom-

panied by the recitation of a *mantra* thrown on the idol's head (as at the conclusion of worship).

Words Under Numeral 18

The eighteen Puranas:—(1) *Matsya*; (2) *Markandeya*; (3) *Bhavishya*; (4) *Bhagavat*; (5) *Brahmanda*; (6) *Garuda*; (7) *Linga*; (8) *Padma*; (9) *Vaman*; (10) *Agni*; (11) *Kurma*; (12) *Skanda*; (13) *Narad*; (14) *Vārūh*; (15) *Brahmavaivartak*; (16) *Vayu*; (17) *Erahm*; (18) *Vūlmiki*.

The minor eighteen Puranas:—(1) *Brahm*; (2) *Vishnu*; (3) *Shiva*; (4) *Brihda Narad*; (5) *Laghunarad*; (6) *Narasinh*; (7) *Bhagvat*; (8) *Renuka*; (9) *Yamanarad*; (10) *Hansa*; (11) *Nandiprokta*; (12) *Vayuprokata*; (13) *Vishnurahasya*; (14) *Takusar*; (15) *Bhagwati*; (16) *Pashupat*; (17) *Bhavishya*; (18) *Brahmand*.

Words Under Numeral 24

The twenty-four elements :—(1-5) *The five natural elements*; viz., the earth; water; fire; wind; space or cavity; (6-10) *The five objects*; viz., sound, touch, form, juice, smell, referring respectively to the ear, the skin, the eye, the tongue and the nostrils; (11-20) *Ten organs* :—five organs of sense and five organs of action; (21) the mind; (22) egotism, self-love considered as spiritual ignorance; (23) intellect; and (24) *maya* (illusion).

Words Under Numeral 33

The thirty-three gods : viz., 12 *Aditya* (suns); 11 *Rudra*; 8 *Vasu*; one *Indra*; one *Prajapati*; total 33.

Words Under Numeral 64

The sixty-four arts or accomplishments :—(1) *Gita* singing or song; (2) *Vādyā* instrumental music; (3) *Nṛtya* dancing; (4) *Natya* union of singing,

dancing and instrumental music; (5) *Alekhyā* writing or drawing; (6) *Visheshakachhed* tatooing or the making of spots, lines and figures on the person by puncturing and staining; (7) *Tandul-kusumbaliprakar* investigating and arraying (an idol etc.) with rice and flowers; (8) *Pushpastaran* spreading and arranging a couch of flowers; (9) *Dashanvasanangarag* painting, staining, dyeing, colouring (of teeth, clothes, body); (10) *Manibhumikakarma* fixing of gems or stained glass into a floor, mosaic work; (11) *Shayanarchan* laying and disposing of beds, sofas, reclining carpets and cushions; (12) *Udakvadya* playing on musical glasses with water; (13) *Nepathyayoga* scenic representation, stage-playing; (14) *Udakaghat* arresting and accumulating water in aqueducts, cisterns or reservoirs; (15) *Chitravyoga* picture-making, limning, decorating etc.; (16) *Malyagrathanvikalp* stringing of rosaries, necklaces; garlands, wreaths; (17) *Karnapatrabhanga* art of making ear-ornaments; (18) *Panakarasaragasavayojan* preparing of lemonades, sherbets, acidulated drinks, spirituous extracts with due flavour and colour; (19) *Suchiranakarma* needlework, tailor work, sewing; (20) *Sutrakrida* making of parrots, flowers, tufts, tassels bunches, bosses, kops, etc. out of yarn or thread; (21) *Sugandhyukti* art of making perfumes; (22) *Vinadamarukavadyani* drum and tabor beating; (23) *Prahelekkutavanidnyana* solution of riddles, enigmas, covert speech, and verbal puzzles; (24) *Pratimala* casting images into a mould. (25) *Durvanchakayoga* device or strategy for outwitting and overcoming the wicked; (26) *Pustakavachan* or *pustakavachashakti* reading, in-

cluding chanting or intoning; (27) *Natakakhyai-kadarshanam* histrionic or scenic representation; (28) *Kavyasamasyapuran* completing stanzas upon receiving a part; (29) *Pattikavetrabanavikalpa* practice with sword, single stick, quarter-staff, bow and arrow etc., fencing archery etc., (30) *Pushpavatika* flori-culture; (31) *Yantramatrika-dharan matrikasanvachyam* art of forming mystical diagrams and of addressing spells, binding amulets etc.; (32) *Manasikavyakriya* poetic creation or invention; (33) *Chhalitayoga* art of deceit and trickery; (34) *Tarkakarma* reasoning or inferring, weighing, pondering, considering; (35) *Talkshana* chopping, paring, planning, carpentry work; (36) *Vastu* architecture; (37) *Rauṣyaratnapariksha* knowledge of coins, metals, and jems; (37) *Dhatuvada* chemistry or minerology; (38) *Maniragadnyan* colouring (by foil or *upadhi*) of gems and beads; (39) *Balakridana* skill in youthful sports; (40) *Akardnyan* judgment (i. e. of appropriate places and of the nature, quantities and qualities of contents of) mines and quarries; (41) *Vrikshayurvedayoga* art of determining the age of trees and plants; (42) *Meshakukkutalaravakayuddhavidhi* urging goats, cocks, quails, etc. to fight one another. (43) *Shukasarikapralapana* teaching of starlings, parrots etc. to speak; (44) *Utsahan*, setting on, stirring up, inciting, animating, stimulating; (45) *Keshamarjan*, kaushala dressing the hair with unguents and perfumes; (46) *Abhidhanakosha* knowledge of the dictionaries or many vocables, languages, dialects; *copia verborum vel fandi*; (47) *Shekharapidayojana*, binding of turbans and chaplets, and forming of crests and top-knots;

(48) *Gandhuyukti*, art of preparing perfumes and odours; (49) *Bhushanayojan*, disposing of ornaments and decorations; (50) *Aindrajala*, magic or sorcery; (51) *Krauchamaranayoga*, art of assuming disguises, characters and deceptive forms; (53) *Hastalaghava*, dexterity or manual skill; (53) *Chitrashakapupabhaktavikarkariya*, culinary art, cookery; (54) *Aksharamushtikakathan*, art of diving the contents of a closed hand; (55) *Deshabhashadnyana*, knowledge of one's own tongue and of its dialects; (56) *Chhandodnyana* knowledge of scanning or construing verse; (57) *Kriyavikalpa* knowledge of processes and methods in general (58) *Vastragopana* art of disguising and falsifying cloths(making cotton to appear as silk, and what is common to appear as fine or good); (59) *Dyutavishesha* art of playing with false dice etc. gambling roguery; (60) *Akarshak-krīda* art of drawing into one's possession (as by *mantras*) of the property of others; (61) *Mlechhitakavikalpa* discrimination of foreign languages (from the Sanskrit); (62, 63, 64) *Vainayikavidyadnyana* or *vaijayikavidyānā* or *vaitalikavidyadnyana* knowledge of the several departments of conjuration, charming, and devil-craft.

The following are also enumerated :—

- (1) *Nritya*; (2) *Chitra*; (3) *Vaditra*; (4) *Mantra*; (5) *Tan'tra*; (6) *Ghanavrishti*; (7) *Sanskritajalpan*; (8) *Kriyākalpa*; (9) *Dnyānā*; (10) *Vidnyana*; (11) *Dambha*; (12) *Ambustambha*; (13) *Gita*; (14) *Talamon*; (15) *Akaragopan*; (16) *Aramaropan*; (17) *Kavyashakti*; (18) *Vakrokti*; (19) *Naralakshana*; (20) *Gajapariksha*; (21) *Hayapariksha*; (22) *Vastushuddhi*; (23) *Laghubbuddhi*; (24) *Shakuna-*

vichar; (25) *Dharmachar*; (26) *Andajachurna-yoga*; (27) *Natya*; (28) *Grihadharma*; (29) *Supra-sadanakarma*; (30) *Kanakasiddhi*; (31) *Varnika-vriddhi*; (32) *Vakpatav*; (33) *Karnalaghava*; (34) *Lalitacharan*; (35) *Tailasurabhitakarana*; (36) *Bhrityopachar*; (37) *Gehachar*; (38) *Vyakarana*; (39) *Paranirakarana*; (40) *Vinanad*; (41) *Vitanda-vad*; (42) *Ankashkti*; (43) *Janachar*; (44) *Kumbhabhram*; (45) *Sharirshram*; (46) *Ratnamanibhod*; (47) *Lipiparichhed*; (48) *Vaidyakriya*; (49) *Kamavishkaran*; (50) *Ranahan*; (51) *Chikura-bandhan*; (52) *Shalikhandan*; (53) *Mukhamandan*; (54) *Kathakathan*; (55) *Kusumagrathan*; (56) *Varavesha*; (57) *Sarvabhashavishesha*; (58) *Vanijya*; (59) *Bhojya*; (60) *Abhidhanaparidāyan*; (61) *Vastrabharan*; (62) *Yathasthan*; (63) *Antyaksharika*; (64) *Prashnahepralika*.

Words Under Numeral 84

Chauryāshīcha-pherā or *garkā*:—the round of eighty-four lakhs of births, rebirths or transmigration.

APPENDIX IV

EPITHETS OF VISHNU FOUND IN THE BHAKTAVIJAYA

THESE EPITHETS ARE ALSO APPLICABLE TO VISHNU'S
AVATARS SUCH AS RAMA, KRISHNA AND VITHOBA

(Alphabetically arranged)

A

Achala :—One whose form is unchanged.

Achintya :—One who is beyond thought and meditation.

Achyuta :—One whose form is unvarying.

Aja :—One without birth.

Ajita :—Unconquered one, invincible.

Antaka :—The destroyer of beings.

Atindriya :—One who is not an object of sound, touch, etc.;
one beyond the sense organs.

Adhokshaja :—One who occupies the space between the
sky and the earth with a universal form.

Anagha :—Free from sin.

Ananta :—(1) Infinite, without end; (2) *Ananta-shāyī*
(*Ananta* the serpent *Shesha*, and *shāyī* recliner):
Recliner on the serpent *Shesha*. (3) *Anantātmā*
Infinite soul.

Anekamurti :—One who assumes various forms.

Amurti or *Amurtimān* :—One without form.

Amrit :—One without death or one who gives salvation to
beings.

Aravindāksha :—Lotus-eyed one.

Avyakta :—One without form.

Avyaya :—One without change.

Ashoka :—One without sorrow, or One who dispels the
sorrows of beings.

Ashvattha :—Unsteady.

Akshara :—One without waste; One whose form suffers no change.

Adideva :—The primal cause of the universe and the home of resplendent qualities.

Ananda :—Giver of joy to beings; One of delightful form.

B

Bija-avyaya :—Unchanged cause of the universe.

Brahm :—The greatest of the great; increaser of the world; the all-pervading element.

Brahmanapriya :—One loved by the Brahmins and who loves the Brahmins.

Bhaktavatsala :—One who is kind to His *bhaktas*.

Bhagavana :—One possessed of the sixfold fortune :

- (1) All-sovereignty, (2) All-excellence; (3) Allglory; (4) All-opulence; (5) All knowledge; (6) Absolute exemption from desire.

Bhayakrit :—Creator of danger to His *bhaktas* who have gone astray.

Bhyanashana :—Dispeller of the disasters of His *bhaktas*.

Bhutatma :—One who resides in the heart of beings.

C

Chakradhara or *Chakri* :—Wielder of the *Sudarshan* disk.

Chaturbahu or *Chaturbhuja*, *Chaturbhava* :—One having four hands indicating, as it were, the four principal objects of human life : (1) The acquisition of merit by pious and virtuous acts; (2) the pursuit of fame, riches or power; (3) the enjoyment of the pleasures of sense; (4) the seeking and working out of final emancipation.

D

Damodara :—One who was fastened by a rope by Yashoda in his Krishna *avatar*.

Devakinandana :—The son of Devaki-Krishna.

Devesha :—God of gods.

Dharanidhara, Dharadhara :—Who in the form of the serpent Shesha supports the earth on his hood, or as a *Varāha* (boar) *avatar* held it on its tusk.

Dhata :—Holder of the earth in His various forms as Shesha, etc.

G

Gadadhara :—Holder of the *Kaumodaki* mace, an indication of intellect.

Garudadhvaja :—Whose banner bears the emblem of Garuda, the eagle, Vishnu's vehicle.

Gopati :—(*Go*, cow or the earth; *pati*, supporter) Supporter of cows or the earth.

Govinda :—Protector of cows, speech and the earth.

H

Hari :—Destroyer of sins or of a desire for earthly life.

Hrishikesha :—The Lord of the senses and of the heart.

I

Ishvara :—Lord of the whole universe and possessor of all-opulence.

J

Janardana :—Punisher of the wicked; Giver of benevolence to beings.

Jaya :—Restrainer of anger, and subduer of all beings.

K

Karta :—Creator of the world.

Kama or *Kanta* :—The most beautiful, as beautiful as a hundred gods of love put together.

Kala :—Destroyer of everything.

Keshava, Keshiha :—One who has beautiful hair, or is the destroyer of the Keshi demon.

Krishna :—Dark-complexioned one, the eighth *avatar* of Vishnu.

Kanta, pati, nayaka, vara, vallabha, nath, dhava, ramana, priya:
 These words following a female noun mean the husband of; e.g. *Ramakanta*, the Husband of Rama; *Rukminipati* the Husband of Rukmini, etc.

L

Lokabandhu:—Brother of other beings.

Lokanath:—Lord of the universes.

M

Madhusudana:—The destroyer of the demon Madhu.

Mahadeva:—The greatest of the gods.

Mahabhaga:—Highly fortunate.

Manohara:—The attracter of the minds of beings by his qualities, such as beauty, etc.

Mahabhuta:—One who does not suffer by the change of time, or who is the elementary truth.

Mahidhara:—One who supports the earth.

Madhava:—The Husband of *Ma* (the goddess of wealth); one born in the Madhu family line.

Mukunda:—Giver of salvation to His *bhaktas*.

N

Narayana:—Pervader of the five elements such as the earth, the water, the fire, the wind and the space; or One who has for His abode the water.

Paramatma:—One beyond cause and effect, One most pure, One ever free.

Parameshvara:—Lord God, the highest of all, and who resides alike in all beings.

Pundarikaksha:—One who lives in the lotus-heart of beings or One whose eyes are like a lotus.

Pushkaraksha:—Lotus-eyed One; One occupying the space.

Purusha:—One who resides in the human body, a town with nine doors, or the Ancestor of all beings.

Purushottama:—The best of all males.

Putatma :—One having a pure soul, or one who is himself pure.

Purna :—One whose desires and powers are complete.

Prakashatma :—Whose soul is full of light.

Prabhu :—Most powerful, resplendent.

Prana :—The Giver of life or the life itself.

R

Rathangapani :—Holder of a wheel-disk.

Ravilochana :—The witnesser of the whole universe, or whose eye is the sun.

Rama :—In the contemplation of whose form the *yogis* are delighted.

S

Satya :—One who is truth, intelligence, infinite and the all-pervading element *brahm*.

Sarvadnya :—The All-knowing.

Sarveshwara :—The Lord of all.

Sudarshana :—Whose form is beautiful to look at; whose sight gives joy to the eyes.

Suresha, Sureshwara :—Lord of all gods.

Swayambhu :—Spontaneous, free.

Brashta :—The creator of everything in the world.

Sharangdhara :—Holder of the *Sharang* bow.

Shiva :—Giver of happiness.

T

Triloksha :—The Lord of the three worlds.

V

Vatsala :—Kind to all.

Vanamali :—The wearer of garlands of wild flowers.

Varada :—Giver of a boon; fulfiller of a wish.

Vāsudeva :—The son of Vasudeva; who lives in all beings and in whom all beings live.

Vijaya :—Who is victory in form.

Vishnu :—Pervader of the moveable and immoveable creation.

Vishvatma :—The Universal Soul.

Veda :—Who is Himself the Vedas; the Giver of knowledge.

Vaikunth :—One who has free movement; whose movement is unimpeded.



APPENDIX V

POETIC FANCIES USED IN THE *BHAKTAVIJAYA*

1. Chakor (a particular bird) is fond of the rays of the moon.
 2. Chatak (another kind of bird) drinks only rain water.
 3. There is a jewel in the hood of a cobra.
 4. Rarely are pearls found in the temple of an elephant.
 5. A female tortoise feeds her young ones simply by steadily looking at them.
 6. Pearls are produced in the ocean if it rains while the *svāti nakshatra* (cluster of stars) is in the ascendant in the sky.
 7. If a diamond is stuck in an anvil it comes out only at the sight of diamond dust. *Diamond* (a masculine noun), *diamond dust* (feminine noun). The idea is that a male is attracted by a female.
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INDEX OF TECHNICAL WORDS, NAMES OF PLACES AND PERSONS

A

Abbott, J. E. vii, xxiii, xxvii

Abhangs 48, 222, 289

Abhidhanakosha 447

Abhinava Bhaktavijaya x

Abhidhan-paridnyan 449

Abhimanyu 391

Abhisheka 271

Absolute, The xxx

Absolute, Impersonal xxvi

Absorption 159

Acclaim 118

Acclamations 216, 428

Accomplishments 445

Accusation 114

Achala 450

Achaman 444

Achintya 450

Achyuta 265, 450

Achyutashram 383

Acquisition 226

Acrobat 298

Actor 174

Adam's bridge 410

Adamant 225, 341

Adbhuta 441

Adhyatmik 434

Adhibhautik 434

Adhidaivik 434

Adhirath 394

Adhokshaja 136, 175, 250, 271,
303, 321

Adideva 451

Aditya 445

Ado 364

Adornments 55

Adulterer 114

Advaita Vedanta xxix, xxxii

Advaitic, Advaitist, Advaitism

xxx

Advice 222

Advocate of *bhaktas* 12, 193

Advocate of Kanhopatra 82

Affection 193, 219, 243, 437

Affliction 33, 434

Agar 441

Agasti, 18, 57, 76, 144, 389,
405, 422

Agastya 405

Agasti drinking the ocean 422

Agnipurāṇ 445

Agnosticism xx

Agochari 435

Ahalya 391, 410, 422

Ahimsa xix, xxviii

Aindrajala 448

Air 103, 118, 141

Airavat 443

Aishvarya, samagra 437

Aja 399, 450

Ajamil 79, 81, 389

Ajan tree 186

Ajatshatru 402

- Aramaropan* 448
Aran 441
 Archery 390, 393, 443, 447
 Architecture 447
Arghya 444
Aristoxenes xxxiii
Arjuna 441
Arjuna 95, 390-1, 393, 396, 401, 405, 408, 436
 Arms 403
 Arrogant 321
Aruna, 391, 398
Arunavati 62
Aravindaksha 450
Asana 439, 444
 Ascetic 114, 119, 218, 334, 403
Āshādh (July) 102, 120, 195, 208, 342, 356, 434
Ashoka
 Ashes 150, 406
Ashram, *char* 434
Ashram 354, 371
Ashrama dharma xviii
Ashrupata 439
Ashṭa siddhis 440
Ashṭabhava 439
Ashṭang 440
 Aspirations, Religious xxv
Ashvapati 417
Ashvattha 451
Ashvathama 401-2, 438
Ashvin (October) 326
Ashvinikumar 396, 403
 Aspirants 266
 Assembly hall 80
 Assimilation 435
 Association 62
 Assumer of *saguna* form 295
 Assurance 425
Asthi 438
 Astringent 437
 Astrologer 416
 Astrology, Astronomy 442-3
Asuras 389
Atharva Veda 435
 Atheist 241
Atindriya 450
Ātmanivedan 440
Ātmaram (Divine Spirit) 1, 16, 200, 265
Ātmarupa 252
 Atom 25, 142, 295
 Atri 162, 390, 399, 401
 Attractor of the mind 348
 Attributes 120, 437, 440
 Auspicious 38, 115, 214
 Austere 437, 439
 Austerities 20, 94, 117, 193, 432
 Avaghad 383
Avahana 444
Avandhya (Nageshwar) 442
Avanti (Ujjain) 18, 394, 418
Avantika 438
 Avarice 263, 313
Avaru (two) 113
Avastha, *char* 434
Avatar 14, 19, 34, 390, 419, 450
Avatarship 17
Avatar, *Dasha* 441
Avyakta 450
Avyaya 450
Ayodhya (Oudh) 438
Ayodhya, Dweller in 193

Axe wielder 441
Ayya Dnyanasagar 108

B

- Baba 383
Babhul tree 58, 65, 133, 242, 255
Bachanag (poisonous *Gloria Superlia*) 333, 338
Bad history & bad morality
xxix
Badrikashram 393
Badge-bearer 234
Bahinabai xiii, 384
Bahira, crazy 151
Bahirambhat 145, 380
Bahu 440
Bailiff 310
Bairagis 13
Bajidkhan 383
Baka 407
Bakul-tree 208, 223, 290, 329
Balaram 391, 395, 398, 403, 412
Ballav 407
Baleghat 296, 331
Bali 230, 406, 413, 438
Bālkānd 167
Balakridana 447
Banasur 406
Banners 103, 125, 259
Bapa 317, 343
Barbers 90, 150
Barnett, xxix
Bastion 159
Basvalinga 384
Bath-*mantra* 299
Bathing places 103
Beautiful-eyed one 85
Bear 426
Bed chamber 83
Bed of arrows 408
Bedar 80, 86, 362, 382
Bee 1, 231
Belgaum x
Bells 218
Belvalkar, Dr. S. K. xxx
Benares 420, 438, 442
Benevolence 462
Bereaved 35
Bewitched 114
Bhagawan 13
Bhagawant 3, 357
Bhagawant bava 384
Bhagawant bhat 384
Bhagavad-gita xxvi, xxviii, 27
328, 345, 373, 397
Bhagwat 54, 153, 394, 416
Bhagwat Puran 282, 445
Bhagavate 442
Bhagirath 406, 430
Bhagirathi (woman) 296
Bhagirathi (river) 19, 175,
274, 302, 341, 406, 430
Bhaktavatsala 451
Bhaktavijaya x, xi, xiv, 6
Bhaktas 1, 13, 451
Bhakti xxvii, xxix, xxxi, 2, 6,
189, 441
Bhakti aspirations xxiii
Bhakti literature xxvii, xxix
Bhakti movement xxx
Bhakti school xxxi-xxxii
Bhakti, spirit of Indian xxvi
Bhakti of the Bible xxvii
Bhakti saints xxiv

Bhakti religion xxvi
Bhaktalilamrit xi, 172
Bhakti Marga xxxii, 289, 420
Bhakti, Navavidha 440
Bhakti poets xxvi
 Bhāmā 426
 Bhandarkar, Sir Dr. R. G.
 xxix, xxx
 Bhandarkar Research Institute
 xxix
 Bhanudas 109, 380
Bharūḍī 336
 Bharata, Bharat 19, 257, 397,
 400, 407, 430
Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak
Mandal ix
 Bhartrihari 383
 Bhasmāsūr 407
 Bhava 131
 Bhavaraya 105
 Bhavani 131
Bhavarth Ramayan 164, 167
Bhavishya Puran 445
Bhayakrit 451
Bhayamak 441
Bhayanashana 451
 Bhil 273, 305, 415, 429
 Bhima, Bhim 51, 396, 400-1,
 429, 436
 Bhima River 82, 367
 Bhimak, Bhishmak 367, 407, 412
 Bhimarathi 131, 195, 349
 Bhimashankar 442
 Bhishma 400, 405, 408
 Bhivara (river Bhima) 343,
 352, 356
 Bhovargaon 316

Bhojya 449
Bhrigu 408, 416, 431
Bhrigu's kick 282
Bhrigukachcha 406
Bhrityopachar 449
Bhuchari 435
Bhurloka 439
Bhushanayojan 448
Bhuta-yudnya 437
Bhutatma 451
Bhuwarloka 439
Bibhishan 406, 411, 438
Bibhatsa 441
Bible xxvii
Bija-avyaya 451
Billion-fold 79
Biographical narratives xxvii
 " *stories* xxiv
Birbal 46
Birth, Mirabai's 66
Bitter 437
Black-cord 94
Black-powder 299
Blessing 105
Blood 438
Blood-shot 161
Blue-complexioned one 79
Body 152
Boar 230, 441
Bodhla, Mankoji 259, 295
Bone 438
Book-keeper 157
Bombay Government Gazette
 xxxiv
Boon 271, 407, 410, 421
Bor tree 65, 255
Borax 280

- Botheration 119
 Bow of Shiva 410
 Bowa 360
 Bracelet 218
 Brahm (House of Salvation) 237
Brahma (Supreme being) 1
 104, 147, 183, 451
Brahma, Brahmadev 1, 18, 20
 117, 122, 174, 390-1, 408,
 422, 423-4, 431-3, 435
Brahmachari, *Brahmacharya*
 xviii, 7, 192, 434
Brahmadand 431
Brahmanda Puran 445
Brahmans xviii, 30, 43, 435
Brahman, a book of *Rigveda* 441
Brahman's kick 280
Brahman's stick 431
Brahmanpriya 451
Brahma Puran 445
Brahmavaivartak 445
Brahmayadnya 437
Brahamani, *Shanta* 100
 Brick 104, 196, 249
 Brihaspati 436
Brihadnarad Puran 445
 Brilliant, Brilliancy 13, 69, 103
 Broad smile 67
 Brother of the lowly 27, 85
 Buddha, Bauddha 29, 406, 441
 Buddhism xxvi, 406
 Buffalo, male 153, 367
 Buka 299
 Burn alive 417
- ©
- Cakes
 Calamity 117, 292
 Calves 424
 Canopied seat 129
 Captivator of the heart 117
 Carpenter 90
 Carrot 262
 Caste 90, 148
 Catechu 442
 Cattle-shed 296
 Cavity 445
 Celestial *rishi* 404
 Celibate 409
 Censure 292
 Ceremony 124, 439
 Ceylon 410, 442
Chachari 435
 Chaff 310
 Chaitanya, Keshav 289
 Chaitanya, Raghav 289
 Chaitra (April) 66, 362
 Chakor 54, 99, 259, 456
Chakradhara 451
Chakrapani 122, 125, 156, 206,
 213, 268, 301, 344
Chakri 451
Chhalitayoga 447
 Chamber 83
 Chambhargonde 277
Chandala xix, 431
 Chandbodhla 383
Chandan 441
Chhandodnyana 448
 Chandra 20
 Chandrabhaga 103, 125, 254,
 342
 Changdev 379
 Chanting 447
 Chanur 12, 231, 398

Chaplet 447
Char Ashram 434
Char Avastha 434
Char Khani 434
Char Mudra 435
Char Mukti 435
Charpati 383
Char Purusharth 435
Char Vani 435
Char Veda 435
Char Varna 435
Char Yuga 435
Characteristic 57
Chariot 17, 97, 143, 392
Chariot of light 226
Charioteer 391
Charming 448
Chaste 306
Chatak 227, 256, 281, 331, 456
Chati 432
Chaturbahu 451
Chaturbhava 451
Chaturbhuj 451
Chaturmāsya 434
Chaugula 311
Chauryashicha phera or
garka 449
Chavada Ratne 442
Chavada Vidya 443
Chawdi 311
Chedi 404, 415
Chemistry 443, 447
Chest 431
Chhali 441
Chhanda 442
Chidghan 348
Chiliyas 108
Child-marriage xx
Chinchwad 237, 276
Chinmayanandan 384
Chitra 448
Chitrabhanu Samvatsar 387
Chitrangad 417
Chitrarath Gandharva 412
Chitrashva 417
Chitrashakapupabhaktari-
karkariya 448
Chitrayoga 446
Chokha the Mahar; Chokha-
mela xii, 79, 81, 305, 379
Chuckled 301
Chudakarma 441
Churned 269, 396
Churning 141, 396. 442
Chyle 438
Circumcised 150
Circumambulate 103, 297
Cloud-dark Krishna 67
Cloud-dark One 1
Cloud of intelligence 1. 24. 85,
173
Cloud of joy 201
Cloud of mercy 81
Clouts 334
Clove 442
Club 17
Coming of the day xxiv
Commentary 153, 243
Commotion 210
Command 207
Communion, religious xxvi
,, with the Holy God xxvii
Compassion 63, 81. 152, 160

Compassionate One 166
 Complexion 25
 Composition 167
 Concentrate 147
 Conception 117, 443
 Conch-shell 17
 Confession xxiv, 118
 Conquest (*Vijaya*) 131
 Consecration 440
 Conscientiousness xxix
 Conspired 117
 Constellations 129
 Consumption 8
 Contemplation 24, 83, 117, 200,
 434-5, 439-40
 Cookery 448
 Copia verborum vel fandi 447
 Copersmith 215
 Cord, black 94
 Ooryphaeus xxx
 Corpse 81, 292, 420, 430
Counter Attack From The East xxi
 Covetousness 437
 Cows xviii, 83, 423, 424, 436
 Cowdung 150, 174, 436
 Cowherds, Cowherdesses xxviii
 83, 95, 238, 423
 Cowpen 324
 Curse 404
 Crazy 151, 174
 Creator of the universe 85, 420
 „ „ „ world 18, 452
 Creditors 115, 247
 Crest-jewel 201
 Crests 447
 Crocodile 83, 125, 218
 Crucible 280

Crude faith 70
 Culinary art 448
 Cupidity 437
 Curds 436-7
 Curtain, marriage 18, 193
 Cymbals 58, 102, 120

D

Dadu pinjari 384
Dahi, curds 436-7
 Daityas 416
 Daksha 405
Dakshina 444
 Dakur 2, 68, 380
 Dalliance xxviii
 Damaghosa 415
 Damaji 84, 85, 380
Dama 441
 Damasheti 376
 Damayanti 399, 404
Dambha 448
 Damodara 451
 Damsel, Heavenly 130, 393, 407
Dāna 441
 Dance 424
 Dancing 445
 Dark blue-complexioned One 3
 Dark-complexioned One 11,
 118, 452
Darshanas Shat 438
Darshan 409
 Daruka 400
 Durva (grass) 444
Dasbodh 199, 200
Dasha avatār 441
Dash Grantha 441
 Dashmukha 411

Dasharath 193,396-9, 409,
415, 419

- Dharaṇā yoga* 439
Dharma xvii
Dharma, Dharmaraja 14, 56, 117, 396-7, 402, 408, 420, 429, 436
Dharma God 420
Dharmachar 449
Dharma, Samagra 437
Dharmavidya 443
Dharur 362
Dhata 452
Dhenuka 172
Dhatuvada 447
Dhopre 440
Dhotar 176, 221, 350
Dhrishtadyumna 401
Dhritarashtra 328, 400-2, 414, 415, 417, 429
Dhruva 392, 403
Dhupa 444
Dhurjati 193
Dhurta xviii
Dhyāna Yoga 440
Dialects 447-8
Diamond 456
Dice 448
Dilip 430
Dindas x
Dipa 444
Director of Public Instruction xxxiv
Dirt of ear 408
Disaster 451
Disciple 104
Discrimination xxvi
Diseases 159
Disk 17, 98, 125, 391,

Disguise 93, 390, 448

Disreputable 221

Distress 115

Divine body 152

,, command 207

,, ear-ring 83, 125

,, essence 152

,, herb 208

,, knowledge 157, 172, 262

,, nectar 216

,, power 405

,, Soul 36, 425

,, things 63

Diversity 189

Divinity 124

Dnyana 448

Dnyana Marga xxxii

Dnyanadev; Dnyaneshwar xxx, 153, 186, 274, 376, 367

Dnyanasagar Ayya 108

Dnyāna Samagra 437

Dnyaneshwari xxx

Dnyanraj 186, 275

Doctrines 90, 420

Doctrine, Indian systems of xxv

,, of Grace xxvi

,, of salvation xxv

Doer 36

Dog's dung 220

Dom 419, 420

Door-keeper 406

Dramatic acting 443

Draught 269

Draupadi 12, 83, 305, 390, 400-1, 430, 436

Draupadi receives four arms 428

Drinking the ocean, Agasti 422

- Drona 400, 402
 Dronacharya 390, 393
 Drum 58, 102, 120, 446
 Drupad 401
 Dualism xxxi
 Dualists xxix
 Duality 197, 266
 Dudh 436
 Dullards 202, 275
 Durga 437
Durvanchakayoga 446
 Durvas 12, 81, 290, 390, 396,
 400-1
Durvash 354
 Duryodhana 38, 56, 117, 273
 305, 394, 400-1, 415, 428
 Dushasan 401
 Dust 295,
 Dutiful 417
Dvādashākshari mantra 442
 Dvaipayana 415
Dvapara yuga 208, 375, 435
Diwali 265
 Dweller at Mathura 11, 14
 „ in Ayodhya 12, 193
 „ „ Pandhari 80
 „ „ Kailas (Shiva)
 108, 126
 „ „ the heart of Thy
bhaktas 85
 „ „ the universe 1, 173
 „ „ *Vaikunth* 27-82, 174
 „ „ the world 82
 „ on the banks of the
 Gomati 1
 „ on the banks of the
 Bhima 51
 Dweller on the sea of milk 12
 Dwaravati 438
 Dwarf 79, 406, 441
 Dwarf-shaped 109
 Dwarka 1, 15, 68, 173
 Dyers 90
 Dyumatsen 417
Dyuta vishesha 448
 Eagle 93, 195, 257, 452
 Eagle-bannered 29, 67, 69,
 132, 173
 „ platform 83, 125
 Ear Ornaments 446
 Ear-rings 83, 125
 Earth 445
 Earth-god 170
 Earthly life 452
 East & West xxvii, xxxiii
 Eastern Savants xxix
 Eclipse 422
 Ecstasy, devotional xxxii
 Economics xxxiii
 Egoism 285, 359
 Eight affections of the body 439
 „ chief wives 136, 409
 „ forms of *Yoga* practice
 174
 „ modes of *Yoga* 439
 „ „ Words Under Numeral
 439
 „ parts of the body 440
 „ (*ashta*) *Siddhis* 440
 „ supernatural powers 131
 „ Vasus 445
 „ Verse formula 14

- Eighteen *Puranas* 443, 445
 " " minor 445
 " castes 337
 Eighty-eight thousand *Rishis* 94
 Eighty-four lakhs of births
 225, 449
Ekadashi 2, 32, 115, 204, 209,
 290
Ekalavya 393
Ekavali 268
Ekadant 238
Eclat 362, 366
Eklings Mairal 384
Eknath xxxi, 155, 381
Elements 411, 437, 445, 451
 " five chief 293
Elephant of Indra 127
Eleven Rudras 445
Eleventh day 204
Ellor 442
Emblem xxviii, xxix, 106, 259
 268, 295
Emblem of Garud 452
Emancipation 451
Emotion 75, 98
Enchanter of the Heart 197
Enchanter of the world 347
Enemy of Demon Tripur
 (Shiva) 289, 304
Enemy of Mura 11, 12, 15
Enigmas 446
Enjoyer 75
Enlightener of intellect 220
Enlightener of the heart 52
Ensigs 103
Envy 437
Epic xix, 411, 413,
- Epithets* of Vishnu 419, 450
Equestrian skill 443
Essence 188, 435
Essence, Divine 152
Essential Form 16, 65
Eternal xxxiii 100, 278, 403
Eternity 122
Ethics 57, 410-11
Ethical holiness xxviii
Ethical laws 87
Eunuchs 353
Ever living 438
Evil demon 122
Exceedingly wonderful 168
Excellence 437
Excommunicate 105
Exhibition 222
Exile 144, 410, 418
Experience, religious xxiv
Existence 159
Extol 125
- Fables* 68
Faculty 440
Fact and fiction xxix
Faggots 61
Fair, complexion, of 119
Faith xxv
Fakir 161, 364
Falsehood in plenty 113
Fame 174
Farid Shaik 384
Farquhar xxx
Fat 438
Father of Brahmudev 58, 99, 117
 " " Cupid 27

Father of the Holy Ganges 99
 Fatigue 246
 Favour of Hari 67
 Feeder of the universe 295
 Festival, Full Moon 66
 Fifth *avatar* of Vishnu 413
 Final deliverance 172
 " Hymn of praise 118
 Fire 445
 Fish 230, 441
 Fishermen 90
 Fisherwoman 417
 Five-faced (Shiva) 132
 " Elements 140, 445
 " Lamps 124
 " Nectars 69
 " Objects 445
 " Organs of action 445
 " " " Sense 446
 Flesh 438
 Foetus 443
 Folded Blanket 241
 Food 157, 425
 Forgiveness xxvii
 Foreskin 150
 Form with qualities 1
 Forms 424
 Formless 97
 Formula 442
 Fortune 427
 Foster, Dr. F. H. xxv
 Founder of religion 252
 Four-armed one 17
 " arms 13, 17, 122, 428
 " hands 95, 451
 " kinds of sins 434

Four Minor *Vedas* 443
 " *Vedas* 443
 " watches 214, 228
 Fourteen gems 228
 " precious things 442
 " sciences 266, 443
 Fourth principal *avatar* of
 Vishnu 404
 " State of Salvation 243
 Fragments xxi
 Fragrant black powder 299
 Free from sin 450
 Full Moon Festival 66
 Funeral pyre 417

G

Gadadhara 452
Gadhi 398, 414
Gajapariksha 448
Gajavadana 238, 261, 280, 361
 Gajendra 80, 238, 397, 404
Gandha Panch 436
Gandhavati 417
Gandhayukti 448
 Gandaki River 75
Gandaki Stone 55
Gāndhār 415
Gāndhārī 400, 403, 415
 Gandini 389
 Gandhi, Mr. xxviii, xxxiii
 Ganesh 1, 19
 Ganeshnath 259, 329, 331, 382,
Ganesh puran xi
Gāndharvas 19, 125, 208
 Ganga *Sharayu* 196
 Ganga Kavishwar 383
 Ganges 5, 149, 361, 406

- Gangadwar 389
 Ganika 398
 Ganpati 167, 237, 261
 Garb 321
Garbhadhan 443
 Gardeners 90
 Garga (Sage) 395
Garima, Siddhi 440
 Garland 446
 Garments, tattered 94
 Garud (Eagle) 254, 391, 398
Garudadhvaja 265, 452
Garudapuram 445
 Gaud 7
 Gautama 391, 398, 422, 436, 438

Gavalguna 416
Gavya, Panch 436
Gayatri mantra 54, 444
 Gazing 93
Gehachar 449
 Gems 226
 Generous 1
Ghanavrishti 448
Ghatika 118, 214, 266
Ghee 261
 Ghrishneshwar 442
Ghruta 437
 Giribai 384
 Girija 405
Gita (book) xxvi, xxviii-xxix 345, 390
 Gita (singing) 445, 448
 Giver of blessing to *Pundalik* 80, 83
 „ „ final deliverance 12
 „ „ happiness 109
 Giver of joy to his *bhaktas* 85
 „ „ joy to beings 451
 „ „ the promise to *Pundalik* 252
 Glorification 63
 Glory of *Vithoba* 125
 Gnat 270
Go (cow) 452
 Goatherd 290
 God, real and saving xxvi
 God. *Holy* xxvii
 „ Personal xxix
 „ „ Spirit of xxiv
 „ „ struggle for xxvi
 „ „ kingdom of xxv
 God-crazy 115
 „ of death 162
 „ „ gods 232, 268, 452
 „ „ wealth 341
 God-loving 6, 14
 God-room 174, 362
 God-supreme 33, 68, 125
 Godavari river xxxi 146, 174, 189, 328
 Goddess of wealth 252
 Gokhale Hall ix
 Gokul 12, 17, 42, 181, 185, 389, 403
 Gold 438
 Gomaiawa 342, 382
 Gomati 2
 Gomaya 436
Gomutra 436
Gondhalis 90
 Gonai 376
 Good, Eternal xxv
 Good deeds 62

Goodness 419, 437, 439
Gopalkala 198, 259, 368
Gopala, Gopal 265, 295
Goputi 452
Gopichand 383
Gopichandan clay 442
Gopis 17, 392
Gora xxvii, xxxii, 378
Gorakhnath 379
Goraksha 379
Gosavi 336, 355
Govinda 1, 17, 186, 202, 285,
 298, 452
Govardhan (mountain) 29, 83
 219
Gowpen 444
Grace, doctrine of xxvi
Grammar 442-3
Granaries 89
Grantha, Dash 441
Granthik 403
Greed 263
Grihadharma 449
Grihastha xviii, 435
Grocer 90, 186, 203, 209, 268
Guggul 441
Guise 261
Gujrat 90, 383
Gula 441
Gulp 422
Gulsare 342
Guna Dharma xviii
Guru 418
Guru of the world 1, 92

H

Halahal 8, 443

Half lion 13, 404, 421, 441
Half man, half lion 3, 404 406,
 441
Halsi 383
Haimavati 405
Hansapuram 445
Hansi 314, 382
Hanumant, Hanuman 93, 168,
 195, 365, 410, 438
Happiness xxv
 'Hara Hara' 108
Harada 441
Hardwar 6, 68
Hari 2, 7, 59, 316, 452
Harischandra 399, 419, 420
Haridas 115, 196, 208, 283, 383
Haridasis 363
Harikirtan 166, 340
Haripal xii
Harishchandis 420
Haritaki 441
Harivijaya 384
 'Hari Vithal' 351
Hastinapur 41, 377, 430
Hasya 441
Hastalaghava 448
Hatred 114
Havaladar 309, 328
Havirbhuva 405
Hayagriva 408, 419
 „ avatar 419
Hayapariksha 448
He who lies on the sea of
 milk 95

Head-jewel 130
Heart 197, 252

- Heathenish 363
 Heaven, Indra's 122
 Heaven-made 133
 ,, of Vishnu 122
 Heavenly Ganges, the coming of 430
 Heavenly Physicians 403
 ,, Singers 19
 Helper 1
 Helper of the helpless 6, 85
 ,, ,, ,, lowly 4
 Herbs 208
 Hereditary 95, 211, 261, 320
 Heresy xxvi
 Heretical doctrines 127
 Hermitage 106, 151, 432
 Heroine 418
 Hesitation 184
 Heterodox 289
 Hidimb 407
 Himalaya 192, 260, 402, 405, 431, 442
 Hindus xxvi, xxviii, xxx, 147
 ,, Ritual 443
 Hinduism xxvi, xxxi
 Hindu scholars xxviii
 ,, thought xxix
 ,, writers xxix
 Hindusthan xxxiv, 66
 Hing 195
 Hingan 80
 Hiranyakashapu 230, 394, 404 406, 421
 Hiranyaksha 413, 421
 History of Indian Philosophy xxx
 History of India xxviii
 History, religious xxvii
- Historical methods xxix
 ,, sense xxix
 ,, truth xxviii
 Hitar tree 298, 329
 Holder of the bow 206
 ,, ,, ,, disk 98, 125, 454
 ,, ,, ,, Sharang bow 6, 25, 86, 98
 Holiness, ethical xxviii
 Holy God xxvii
 ,, places xvii
 ,, Scriptures xxv
 ,, water xvii
 Homa xviii
 Home of compassion 85
 Honey 441
 Hons 234, 309
 Hood 452
 Hook xxi
 Horsemanship 443
 Horse Sacrifice 402
 Horse with seven mouths 443
 Hridaya 440
 Hrishikeshi 187, 245, 266, 452
 Huhu 404
 Humanity 425
 Hunter 422
 Husband of Janaki 41, 167, 193, 208
 ,, ,, Kamala 85, 201, 318
 ,, ,, Laxmi 5, 13, 97
 ,, ,, Ma 453
 ,, ,, Mhalsa (Khandoba) 198
 ,, ,, Parvati (Shiva) 108
 ,, ,, Radhika 1

Husband of Rāmā 5, 19, 453	Indian Mysticism: Mysticism in
" " Rohini (moon) 227	Maharashtra
" " Rukmini 4, 6, 11,	Indian systems of doctrine xxv
118, 453	Indian thinkers xxv
" " Uma (Shiva) 181	Indian Historical Research ix
Husbandry 443	Indescribable 122
Husen, Shaikh 384	Indestructible 252, 270
Hypocrisy 155, 168, 305	Indifference to worldly things
Hypocritical way 49, 114	120
I	Indra 8, 20, 87, 125, 175, 390,
Ideas, fundamental xxvi	392, 396, 413, 416, 419,
Illusion 36, 85, 120, 194, 445	422, 435, 445
Illusory 86, 152, 306	Indrajit 12, 392, 412
" <i>itā</i> 97	Indrāni 392
Illustrations xxvi	Indrayani river 186, 228, 288
Image 123, 446	Indradyumna 397
" of joy 201	Indriyas, <i>Nava</i> 440
Imagery xxviii, xxix	Indulgence 250
Immovable 221, 252	Infant death rate xxxii
Imperishable 221, 270	Infanticide xx
Imperishable good xxv	Infinite xxv
Impersonal, The xxx	Infinite love xxix
Impersonal Absolute xxvi	Infinite minuteness 440
" God xxxii	" number of <i>avatars</i> 85
" Deity xxx	" one 12, 52, 83, 173
Impulses xxvi	" Soul 450
Impunity 425	" universe 6, 11
Incarnation 25	" wonders 130
Incognito 400, 402	Inhabitant of the ocean of milk
India 410	367
India, Religion of xxv	Inheritance 260
India's Battle against Panthe-	Inner chamber 92
ism xxv	Innumerable forms 423
India's heritage xxxiii	Insight xxvii
India's Religion of Grace xxiv,	Installation rites 134
xxv	Inspiration 206, 252, 270
India's struggle for God xxvi	Instructions 61, 146, 444

Instrument 85, 167, 202
 Intellect 252, 445
 Internal Witnesser 173
 Intelligence 173, 454
 Interpretation 443
 Intrigues 411
 Intoning 447
 Intuition 114
 Invisible xxvii, 98
 Invincible 450
 Invitation 115, 246
 Invoking 444
 Invocation 109, 270
 Iron 439
 Irresistible 49
Ishitva Siddhi 440
Ikshvaku 399, 419, 430
Ishvara 452

J

Jagamitra Naga xii
Jagannath 14, 27, 29
Jagruti 434
Jagtap 296
Jaimini 399
Jaimini Ashvamedh 399
Jayishnu xix
Jamadagni 398, 405, 468, 412
Jamb 189
Jambhāsura 394
Jāmbuvati 399, 425
Jambuvant 399, 425
Jamna, Jumna 7, 52, 395, 424
Janachar 449
Janajaswant 37, 38, 41, 380
Janaka 418
Janaki, The husband of 32, 41,
 167, 193, 208

Janaloka 439
Janarānpant 155,
Janardan (God) 166, 167, 177,
 381, 452
Jangha 440
Jangam 105
Jani 378
Japa 274
Jarā (Hunter) 397, 438
Jara (old age) 438
Jārāja 434
Jarasandh 407
Jata Karma 444
Jatamasi 441
Jatayu 391, 398
Jatū 411
Jaya (Victory) 131
Jaya (Vishnu) 452
Jayadev 376
Jayanti, 416
Jayanti, Ram 363
Jayaram, Shri Ram Jaya Jaya
Ram 442
Jayasena 409
Jayphal 436
Jealousy 437
Jejuri 198
Jewels 67, 124
Jiva 379
Jivanmuktas 200
Joad, C. E. M. xxi
Jagamitra Naga 378
Joga Paramanand 378
Johar 94, 311
Jondhala 308
Juices, six sweet 161

Jula 441

Jyotirlinga 260, 442

Jyotisha 442

K

Kabir xxx, 152, 376

Kadaryu 394

Kaikeya (country) 397

Kaikeyi 397, 399, 407

Kailas 346

„, Lord of 54

Kaitabha, Madhu 408

Kal (God of death) 59,
272, 342

Kalanki 441

Kalayavan 395, 397, 409

Kali Yugu 14, 15, 32, 128, 193
205, 232, 272, 374, 435

Kalika 368

Kālindi 395

Kaliya 75, 145, 341

Kalkeya Asuras 389, 422

Kaloji (Death) 223

Kalpa 408, 442

Kala 452

Kalyan 7, 380

Kalyan (town) 104

Kalyani 71

Kama 452

Kamal xii, 377

Kamala 85, 100, 201, 318

Kamarishkaran 449

Kampa 439

Kanad 438

Kanaksiddhi 449

Kanarese 91, 97

Kanchi 438

Kanyakubja 389

Kanhaya 383-4

Kanhopatra 78, 380

Kanka 402

Kankol 436

Kans, Kansa 12, 17, 58, 231,
389, 392, 395, 396, 398, 405

Kanta 452

Kansya 439

Kanuya, Panch 436

Kapil 407, 432

Kapila 138

Kapilvastu 406

Kapur 436, 441

Karma (fate) 88, 101, 118.

Karmabai 29, 33, 380

Karma Marga 289

Karna 393, 396, 400

Karna-laghav 449

Karnapatrabhanga 446

Karta 452

Kartavirya 405, 416

Kartik 104, 120, 208, 326, 434

Karun 441

Kasegaon 370

Kashi 438

Kashipati 106

Kashivishveshwar 442

Koshttha 441

Kashya 418

Kashyap, Kashyapa 391, 398,
405

Kasturi (musk) 30

Kathakathan 449

Kasthaaramrita xi

Kathi (twenty) 113

Kathiawar 442

- Kauravas** 208, 394, 397, 402, 414
Kauravas attempt to burn the Pandavas 429
Kausalya 397, 399, 409
Kaustubh 18, 83, 218, 443
Kavadi (sling) 260
Kavayasamasya Puran 447
Kavishwar, Ganga 383
Kavishwars xviii
Kavyashakti 448
Kayadhu 394, 406
Kayik 434
Kazi 147
Kedareswar 42
Kernel 173, 273
Keshamarjankausalya 447
Keshav, Keshiha 31, 185, 452
Keshavswami 337, 382
Kevala (one) 113
Khandis (=160Lbs.) 95
Khandoba 198
Khandya, Shri 172, 175, 381
Khani, Char 434
Khachari 435
Kichak 407
Killer of Kans 58
King of birds 257
King of Kings 70, 125
King of munis 426
King of Pandhari 135, 171
King of the Yadavas 85, 95, 136
Kingdom of God xxv
Kiratas 413
Kirtans 16, 18, 99, 187, 440
Knowledge 157, 165, 172, 409
Knower of the heart 252
Krama 411
Kraunch birds 414
Kraunchamaranayoga 448
Kripacharya 438
Krishna xxviii, 1, 3, 15, 67, 172, 389, 390, 395-8, 401, 403, 405, 423, 441, 450, 452
Krishna and the wives of the Rishis 424
Krishna as a gift, Giving up of 426
Krishna humbled the pride of Narad 425
Krishna's manifestation to Surdas 50
Krishna takes the form of cows and calves 423
Krishnadas Mudgal 383
Krishnadvaipayana 415
Krishnambhat 383
Kritayuga 374, 435
Kritavirya 416
Kriyakalpa 448
Kriyavikalpa 448
Kshama 441
Kshatriyas 90, 230, 252, 394, 405, 413, 419, 431, 435
Kshetras xvii
Kshudha 438
Kuber 341, 411
Kubja 395
Kuchail 418
Kulkarni (the town scribe) 190
Kumbhabhram 449
Kumbhakarna 12, 396
Kumbhakonam xvi
Kunbis (farmers) 324

L

Life of the world 4, 9, 11, 15, 117
Lifter of the mountain
Govardhan 29

Light 156
 Light of the heart 100
Lila 29, 107, 215
 Limitless one 294
 Limits 74
 Ling, Lingam 105, 106
 Lingayats 48
Ling Puran 445
Lipiparichhed 449
 Liquor 92
 Literature, Marathi Religious
xxv
 „ , sacred xxviii

Locusta 88
Lodging house, free 43
Logic 443
Lohagaon 283
Loins 227, 444
Loka, sapta 439
Lokabandhu 453
Lokanath 453
Lolimbraj 383
Lord Krishna 55
 ,, Ranchhod 1
 ,, of all 1
 ,, Shri Krishna 428
 ,, of Ayodhya 167
 ,, ,, creation 295
 ,, ,, Dwarka 7, 173
 ,, ,, Heaven 109
 ,, ,, Kailas 54
 ,, ,, Kamala 100
 ,, ,, Pandhari 81, 99
 ,, ,, Rukmini 11

- Maila, Malaya Mount** 25, 255
Mairal Ekling 384
Majja 438
Malevolent 324
Malice 235
Malla 198
Mallikarjuna 442
Malopant 384
Malukdas 383
Maluyagrathanvikalp 446
Manas lake 383
Manas puja 2, 102, 196
Mānasik 434
Manasikavyakriya 447
Mandar Mountain 230, 396
Mandodari 411, 436
Mandhata 442
Mangs 22, 30, 285
Mangalvedhe 78, 85
Mani 198
Manibhumikakarma 446
Manifested 42, 268
Manifestation 50, 155, 316
Maniragadnyan 447
Manthara 397
Maukoji Bodhla 295, 382
Manohara 453
Mansa (flesh) 438
Mantra 54, 104, 172, 288, 322, 401, 445, 448
Mantra, Panchaskhari 436
Mantrapushpa 444
Manushyayadnya 437
Maratha (caste) xix
Maratha saints xxx
 „ country xxx
Marathi 205
Marbugh xxiv xxvi
Marga, Bhakti 289, 420
Marga, Karma 289
Margeshvar (December) 285
Marriage 444
 „ **Curtain** 13
Markandeya Puran 420, 444
Maruti 18, 168, 190, 199, 257, 364, 381, 392, 430, 438
Marrow 438
Martand (Khandoba) 199
Marvad 377
Masons 90
Matang (sage) 415
Matriksanvachyam 447
Matsya avatar 408, 419, 441
Matsyagandha 417,
Matsya Puran 445
Matsyendranath 379
Maya 49, 96, 118, 152, 163, 197, 295, 337, 438, 445
Maya, Primal 77
Mathura 6, 7, 42, 68, 380, 389, 392, 415, 438, 443
Medal 218
Medicine 443
Meditating 440
Meditation xxxi 64, 117
Medha 438
Meghashyama 265
Meghnad 392
Menaka 19, 78, 414, 443
Merciful to thy bhaktas 201
Merciful to the humble 141
Meridian 337

- Meru** 282, 367
Meshakukkutalavakayuddhavidhi 447
Metaphysics xxv
Metaphysical Speculation xxvi
Mhalsa 198
Millions of suns 18
Mimansa 438, 443
Minavati 384
Mineralogy 447
Mirabai 65-6, 380
Miracle 96, 168, 424
Mirage 73
Mirth 441
Misery xxv
Mistress of all sacred waters 125
Missiles 390, 392
Mithilā 410
Mitravindā 409
Mitravarunā 389, 413
Mlechhitakavikalpa 448
Moghul power xix
Mogra 25, 314
Moha (temptation) 438
Mohanmal (necklace) 218
Mohini 407
Moksha 389
Mol (holy grass) 71
Monism xxx, xxxi
Monistic xxx
 ,, mysticism xxv-xxvi
 ,, philosophy xxix
Moog (a sort of grain) 301
Moon 227, 443, 444
Moozumdar 91
Moral values xxv
Moreshwarbava Tambve 385
Most beneficent Being 1
Mote 306
Moth 367
Moth, Motha 441
Mother-love 201
Mother of the universe 228
 ,, ,, ,, world 124
Mouse 237
Mridang (drum) 364
Mrityu 438
Mrityuloka 434
Mrityunjaya Swami 99, 100, 380
Muchakund 395, 409
Mudgal, Krishnadas 383
Mudhaya 383
Mudra, char 435
Muhammad, Shaikh 259, 277, 381
Muhammadan 24, 62, 82, 86, 100, 147, 209, 308
Muirhead, Prof. xv
Mukaddam 314
Mukhamandan 449
Muktabharanavrata xi
Mukti 159
Mukti, char 435
Mukunda 186, 246, 453
Mukundraj 104, 383
Mula 349
Mulu (five) 113
Muni 12, 20, 439
Munishwar, Madhva 484
Munj 444
Mura 11, 12, 15
Murar, Rasik 52, 380
Murari 292, 378

- Music 118, 443
 Musk 195
 Mustard 276
 Mutha 849
 Mystic formula 438, 442
 Mystic *mantra* 323
 „ „ „ Ram Krishna
 Narayana ” 60
 Mysticism xxx, xxxi
 „ acosmistic xxv
 „ in Maharashtra xxx
 Mythological elements 411
- N**
- Naga* 399, 404
 Nageshwar 442
 Nagnath 151-2, 377
 Nagau 309
Naivedya 440, 444
Nakhla 441
 Nakra 404
Nakshatra 456
 Nakul 396, 403, 405, 436
 Nala 399, 404
 Nama, Namdev xii 68, 152,
 205, 376-7, 376
Namakarana 444
 Namapathki 383
Namaskar 2, 3, 17, 163, 440
Namas Shivaya 437, 438
 Nanda 13, 95, 392, 397, 403
 409, 423, 424
 Nandi 403
 Nandigrama 257, 430
Nandiprokta *uran* 445
 Nanaksadan 383
 Narad 6, 18, 131, 156, 230, 377,
 395, 404, 417, 425
Narad Puran 445
 Narahari (Vishnu) 265,
 Narahari (Name of a *bhakta*)
 378, 384
 Narakasur 397
Naralakshana 448
 Narasinhapura 356
Narasinha Puran 445
 Narasiraj Mehta xii
 Narayan Nimbaya 364
 Narayan 5, 13, 17, 183, 273, 453
 Narayan (Saint) 384
Narayan Rishi 393
 Narayan (Sun) 111
 Narayanpur 105
 Narobababa 384
 Narmada, Nurmada river 442
 Narrative of fact xxviii
 Narratives, biographical xxvii
Narsinha avatar 441
 Narsinhasaraswati 384
 Narsinhabharati-Narayan 383
 Narsinhanagar 383
 Nasik 442
Natakakhyayikadarshanam 447
 Natural affection 437
Natya 445, 449
Nava Indriyas 440
Nava Rasas 411
Navavidha Bhakti 440
Nayak xviii, 453
 Necklaces 137, 446
 Needle Work 446
 Nectar 29, 87, 99, 162, 216, 443
Nepathya Yoga 446
Nepur 11, 18, 70, 218, 257, 268
 'Neti Neti' 271

- New standards xxviii
 Nigantu 442
 Niloba 294, 348, 359, 382
 Nimbaraja 38, 259
 Nimbaya Narayan 384
 Nimityadharma xviii
 Nine kinds of *bhakti* 440
 Nine Organs 440
 Nine Sentiments or Passions 441
 Ninth *avatar* of Vishnu 406
 Nira 356
 Niradhar 7, 11, 380
 Nirashraya 11
Nirukta 442
 Nishadha 404
Nishkaraman 444
 Nivritti 377
Niyama Yoga 439
 Nostrils 413
 Nrisinha 404, 406, 421
Nritya 445, 448
 Numerical Code 113
 Nutmace 442
 Nutmeg 442
Nyaya 438, 443

 Obeisance 1, 7, 29, 118, etc.
 Oberlin, Ohio (U. S. A.) xxv
 Oblation 436, 444
 Obscuration xxvi
 Obsequies 444
 Obstinate 40
 Ocean 413
 Ocean of compassion 17
 „ „ goodness 85
 „ „ mercy 52, 85, 201

 Ocean of milk 117, 206
 „ „ nectar 162
 Odorous 448
 Offering 124, 146, 444
 Ohio xxv
Om Namas Shivaya 438
 „ *Namo Bhagavate*
 Vasudevaya 442
 Omen 268
 Ominous 71, 344
 One Communion and one God
 xxiv-xxv
 One Faith and one Communion
 xxiv-xxv
 One hundred and eight sacred
 rivers 131
 One Indra 445
 „ *Prajapati* 445
 „ tusked god 238
 Onkareshwar 442
 Organs, Sense 145, 450
 Ornament of His *bhaktas* 4, 85,
 231
 Ornament of the Universe 295
 Ornamentation 125
 Orthodox xxii, 36
 Othodox Hinduism viii
 Otto, Dr. xxiv, xxv, xxvi, xxvii
 Oudh 410
 Out-caste 90
Ovi 227

 Pack-horse 116
Pada xxx
Padas 153
Padak 268

- Padāṅguli* 440
Pādassavan 440
Padmalaya 142
Padmanabha 379
Padma Puran 420, 445
Padmavati 376
Padya 444
Pagar 94
Paithan xxxi
Palestine xxvii
Palm 194
Palmist 361
Pampā lake 415
Panakarasaragasavayojan 446
Panch Gavya 436
 „ *Gandha* 436
 „ *Kos* 13
 „ *Kannya* 436
 „ *Mahabhute* or *Tatve* 436
 „ *Mahayadnya* 436
 „ *Pandava* 436
 „ *Pran* 435
 „ *Tanmantra* or *Vishaya* 436
Panchagnisadhan 437
Panchakshari mantra 437
Panchamrita 437
Panchanan 199
Pandavas 14, 74, 390, 394, 396
 400-3, 405, 416, 428-30, 436
Pandavpratap 384
Pandhari 14, 78, 198
Pandharpur xxiii, 80, 81, 102,
 134, 342
Pandharimahatmya xi
Pandharinath 117, 153
Pandu 390, 396, 402-3, 415
Pandurang 14, 80, 116, 198, 204
Pandurang stotra xi
Pandya 397
Pansupari 87
Pantheism xxv, xxix
Pantheists xxix
Pantheistic Philosophy xxxii
Parali 442
Paramatma 36, 453
Parameshwar 453
Paramartha Sadhanalaya
 Sanstha xvi
Paranirakaran 449
Parashar 415
Parā Vani 435
Paramahansa 329
Parashuram 252, 394, 398,
 404-5, 408, 410, 412
Pargaon of Salomalo 350
Pārijatak 443
Parikshiti 391, 402, 416
Paris 154, 256, 368
Parisa Bhagawat 378
Parvati 108, 405
Pavaman 43
Pavitru (*Seven*) 113
Pashūpat Puran 445
Pashyanti Vani 435
Passion 437, 441
Paste, sandalwood 101,
 „ *of white clay* 64
Papujipant 384
Pātāl 434
Patanaajala (*yoga*) 438
Pathan 210, 212
Pathos 269, 420

- Pati* 452-53
Pati 278, 295-96
Pattikavetrabanavikalpa 447
Pauranic 389
 " atmosphere xxvii
 " Names xxvii
 " Narratives xxviii
 " Stories xxxi
 " Stamp xxvii
Paya 436
Payali 95, 307
Pea 307
Peace 145, 251
Peacock 251
Peahen 251
Pearl-garland 67
Peddler 112, 116
Pellmell 212
Penance xviii, 106, 149,
Penitence 41, 47, 102
People, pious xxvi
Perfect-avatar 424
Perfections 440
Performance 261
Performer 124, 197
 " of *litā* 109
Perfumes 446-7
Perpetual fire 35
Perplexity 210, 231
Perseverance 266
Personal God xxix xxxi
 " trust xxvi
Personality xxv
Perspiration 231, 439
Pervader of the movable and
 the immovable 252
 the universe 1, 11, 15
Pervader of the world 100
Pestle 151
Phalgun (March) 362
Philosopher 416
Philosophy xxv, 70, 165, 200, 438
Phonda Ghat (Post Office) x
Physician 223
Pilgrims 102, 120
Pilgrimage xvi, 78, 102, 187
Pinda xxx
Pingala 193
Pious people xxvi
Pipaji, King 379
Pipal Tree 885
Pipasa 438
Pitriyadnya 437
Pity-arousing 17
Platter light 70, 166
Plead 120
Pluralism xxx
Pods 307
Poets, Bhakti xxvi
Pohochya 20
Poku (four) 113
Politics xxxii, xxxiii
Pollution 325
Pomp 124
Poona ix, xxix-xxx, 209-10, 442
Posture 197, 439
Pothi x
Potter 90, 154
Prabhakar 174
Prabhu 454
Practices, religious 165
Pradakshina 444
Prādhā 399
Pradyumna 412

Prahalikakutavanidnyana 446
Prahlad 68, 74, 317, 341, 394, 404, 406
Prahlad Badve 384
Praise-service 228
Prajapati 445
Prākāmya Siddhi 440
Prakashatma 454
Pralamba 235
Pralaya 439
Prana 435, 454
Prānāyām yoga 439
Prapti siddhi 440
Prashnahepralika 449
Prayers xxiv
Patimala 446
Pratishthan 110, 145, 173
Pratyāhār yoga 439
Pravara (river) 387
Predicament 58
Preface, Translator's xxv
Preparation xxiv
Pride 155, 235, 437
Pride, Bharat humbles
 Maruti's 430
Primal force of the universe 163
Primal form of the universe 252
Primal mayas 77
Primal mother
Primal Pillar 270
Prithvi 436
Priya 453
Procession 143
Pronunciation 443
Prophecies 208
Prosody 442-3
Prostitute 78, 173, 193
Prostrate namaskar 2, 17, 248
Prostration 248
Protector of cows 452
 " " the helpless 128
Protestants xxvi
Provider 361
Puloma 416
Pulastya 38, 405
Pumpkin 321
Punsavan Sacrifice 443
Pandalik 4, 78, 80, 83, 103, 254, 295
Pundarikaksha 453
Pundit vii, xviii, 39
Pungal creeper 208, 223, 329
Pungent 437
Purandar (Indra) 295
Puranas xxviii, 40, 414, 420
Purified 104, 130
Purifier of the Sinful 1
 " " " **Sinner** 2, 17, 90, 193
Purity 425, 441
Purna (Vishnu) 454
Purochan 429
Puru 402
Purusha (Vishnu) 453
Pururava 393
Purusharth, char 435
Purushottam 201, 207, 453
Purvamīmāṃsa 399
Pushkar 404
Pushkarāksha 453
Pushpa (flower) 444
Pushpastaran 446
Pushpavatika 447
Pushpak viman 411
Pustakavachan 446

Pustakavachashakti 446

Putana 405

Putātma (Vishnu) 454

Puzzle 446

Pyre, funeral 417

Q

Quality of goodness 439

Qualityless 97

R

Radha 22, 93, 183, 313, 394

Radhakrishnan, Dr. S. xiv, xxi,
xxxiii

Radhawali 70

Rādheya 394

Radhika 1, 346

Radiant of form 109

Raft 308

Rags, goddesses of 350

Ragas 19

Raghav 12

Raghunandan 376

Raghunath 166, 190, 364

Raghupatishesha 384

Rahu (darkness) 285, 319

Raiments 12, 55

Rajai 124

Rajata (silver) 438

Rajawade, Mr. xix

Raka Kumbhar xii, 378

Rakshasas 411

Rakta 438

Ral 441

Raler, Raleras 31, 12, 314-5

Ram, Rama 32, 116, 189-90

390, 392, 400, 405, 409, 418

436, 441, 450, 454

Ramā, Husband of 5, 19

Ramākant 453

Ramana 453

Ramasetu 410

Rāmāyana 27, 166, 207, 282,
411, 413-14, 418-9

Ramayan, Bhavarth 164, 167

Rambha 19, 78, 125, 411, 416,
443

Ramchandra 328, 397

Ramdas of Dakur 1, 380

Ramdas of Jamb xvii, xix,
189-90, 381

Rameshwar 7, 442

Ramkrishna 379

Ramanavami (festival) 363

Rampuribava 320

Ramraja (King of Vijayanagar)
121, 123

Ramvijaya 384

Ranade, Mahadev Govind xvii

Ranade, Prof. R. D. xxx

Ranahan 449

Ranchhod 1

Ranga, Sri 117

Ranjangaon, Sandas 349

Ras, Nava (sentiments) 441

Rasa (juice) 436,

Rasa (chyle) 438

Rasikmurar 52, 380

Rasmandal 379

Rathangapani 454

Ratnagiri (Dist.) x

Ratnamanibodh 449

Ratne, chavada 442

Raudra 441

Raupyaratnapariksha 447

- Rāvan** 12, 38, 193, 230, 392
 396, 398, 406, 410-11
 418, 430, 436
Ravilochan 454
Readers xxvii
Reality of the world xxv
Reason xxv
Rebirths 2
Rebuking by 148
Recital 33, 115
Recliner on the serpent
 Shesha 24, 117, 174, 450
Records xxiv
Redeaths 2
Redemption xxv
Reformation xxvi
Refuge 224, 404
Regions, nether or lower 404,
 406
Religion 410-11
Religion, a genuine xxvi
 „ practical xxvi
 „ a science of xxiv
 „ of acosmistic mysti-
 cism xxv
 „ of experience xxvi
 „ of grace xxvi
Religious aspirations xxv
 „ classics xxix
 „ communion xxvi
 „ experience xxiv
 „ history xxvii
 „ literature xxv
 „ reform xxxi
 „ value xxv
Remorse 140
Renuka 230, 412
Renukānandan 384
Renukapurān 445
Repentant, Repentance 41, 22,
 84, 116
Resplendent 130
Repugnance 54
Reputation 94, 247
Resin 429
Resort 424
Retirement 416
Revelation 104
Reverence xxvi, 41, 84
Reverential feelings 54
Reville, Reviling 117, 160
Revilers 71, 207, 222
Riband 331
Rice 156, 177, 439, 444
Richika 398
Riddles 446
Riddhi 137, 237
Righteousness xxviii
Rigveda 43, 435, 441
Rigvedi Brahman 155
Rise of the Maratha Power xvii
Rishi Agasti 57, 144
Rishi 24, 305, 393, 404, 417,
 438-9
Rishipanchami Vrata xi
Rishyashring 400
Rites, Religious 117
Rituparna of Ayodhya 404
Rivulets 223
Rob 247
Rogers, Sir Leonard xvi
Rohidas (Bhakta) 379, 399
Rohatha (Rohidas) 399, 419-20
Rohini 227

Romanch 439
 Ramesh C. Dutt 410
 Root of joy 1
 Roses 441
 Rosaries 446
 Royal horse sacrifice 402
 Rudras, eleven 445
 Rukmangad 412
 Rukmi 407, 412
 Rukmini 11, 15, 52, 93, 183,
 397, 412, 415, 426,
 Rukmini, the husband of 6, 25
 11, 83, 118, 183, 453
 Rukminipati 453
Rupa 436

S

Sabha Deccan ix
 Sacred bathing place 103
 Sacred city 7, 9
 " fire 146
 " literature xxviii
 " places 7, 117
 " thread, string 110, 155
 " water 53
 Sacrifice 481-2
 Sacrificial fire 401
 " ceremonial xviii
 Sadanand 383
Sadguru 3, 104-5, 156, 323
Sādhak 318
Sadharan Dharma xviii
 Sadhus 38
 Saffron 301, 442
 Saffron mark 259
 Sages 225, 433
 Sagar king 406, 430
Sagun form 109, 132, 153
Sagundhyakti 446
 Sahadev 396, 405, 415-6, 436
 Sahasrarjun 416
Sahishnu xix
 Saints 27, 90, 116, 436
 " , *bhakti* xxiv
 " Maratha xxx
 " Maharashtra xxv
 Sairandhri 402
 Sākhar 441
Sākhya 440
Salokatū 435
 Salomalo 350
 Salt 437
 Salt manufacturer 90
 Salvation xxvi, 116, 243
 " , doctrine of xxv
 Salvation-giving cities 7, 438
Samādhi 440
Samagra Aishvarya 437
 " *Dharma* 437
 " *Dnyāna* 437
 " *Shri* 437
 " *Vairagya* 437
 " *Yasha* 437
Samān 436
Sama Veda 435
Samavartana 444
 Samba (son of Jāmbuvati) 399
Samiptā 435
 Sampati 391
 Samuchchaya (name of a
 jangam) 105
 Sanak 201, 225, 416, 433
 Sanandan 416
 Sanatkumara 416
 Sanatsujata 416

- Sandals 407
 Sandalwood oil 124
 „ „ paste 101, 444
 Sandipani 418
Sanhitā 441
 Sanjaya 27, 208, 328, 416
Sankalpa (Resolve) 222, 228
Sankhya (*Shastra*) 438
Sansargik (contagious) 439
 Sanskrit 166, 276, 411
Sanskritajalan 448
Santalilamrit xi
Santavijaya xi
 Santoba (Sambaji) Powar xii, 259, 348-53, 382
 Santosha 441
 Sannyas 435
 Sannyasi xviii, 64, 146, 228, 243
Saptachiranjiva 438
Sapta Dhatu 438
 „ *loka* 439
 „ *padi* 439
 „ *Puris* 260, 438
 Sarase 331
Saransha Dnyaneshwari xi
 Sarasvati 5, 19, 167, 206, 255
 Sardesai G. S. xix
Sarupatā 435
Sarvabhashavishesha 449
Sarvadnya 454
Sarveshvara 454
 Sati (wife of Shiva) 405
 Satrajit 20, 417
Satvaguna 439
 Satvat race 417
 Satvika (name of a King) 27, 29, 380
Satvika (truthful) 29
Satya 441, 454
 Satyagraha (soul-force) xxviii
 Satyabhama 6, 15, 21, 93 397, 417, 426
Satyaloka 433, 439
 Satyavan 417
Satyavati (*Matsyagandha*) 398, 415, 417
Satyavati (daughter of Gadhi) 398
Savadhan 191
 Savant D. A. x
 Savants, Eastern xxix
 Savantwadi x
 Savata 153, 378
 Saviour of the lowly 6, 85, 90
 „ „ „ Vedas 295
 „ „ „ world 1, 295
 Savitri 147
 Savoury 113
 Saya (town) 29, 52
Sayujyata 435
 Scarf 118
 Scholarship xxvii
 Science of Religion xxiv
 Scruple 221, 273, 294
 Sea of milk 95, 174
 Seclusion 220
 Second watch 119
 Sects and schools xxix
 Seduced 119
 Seemingly impossible thing 152, 182
 „ impudent speech 151
 Self-restraint 439
 Self-surrender xxvi
 Self-torture xxi

- Selu (six) 113
 Sena 22-4, 380
 Sensuality 130
 Sentiments xxvi, 441
 Serpent (Kaliya) 424
 Seven chapters of *Rāmāyan* 167
 Seven elementary Substances
 of the body 438
 Seven ever-living persons 438
 Seven *lokas* (worlds) 439
 Seven metalic substances 438
 Seven salvation-giving sacred
 cities 260, 438
 Seventh *avatar* of Vishnu 409
 436
 Sexual passion 437
 Shabari 415
Shabda 436
Shadguna 437
Shadakshari mantra 438
Shadras 437
Shadripu 437-38
Shadurmi 438
Shadurminadi 438
Shadvarga 437
 Shaik Farid 384
 ,, Husein 384
 Shaikh Muhamad 259, 277, 381
 Shaivite 107
 ,, elements xxx
Shakti xxx
 Shakuni 403, 415
 Shakuntala 409, 414
Shakunavichar 448
 Shakyasinha 406
Shaligram 55, 290, 379
Shalikhandan 449
 Shalivahan era 387
 Shalva 417
 Shalya 400
Shama (restraint of passions)
 441
 Shankar 182, 392
 Shankaracharya xxxi, 60, 383
 Shankarjibava 384
 Shankhasur 230
Shānta (tranquility) 441
 Shānta Brahamani 100
 Shantanu 402, 408, 417
 Shape 156
Sharakand (wood) 151
Sharang bow 6, 25, 220
Sharangdhar 212, 454
Sharkara (sugar) 437
 Sharayu Ganga 196
Sharirashrama 449
Shashthi 437
*Shashthi puja*n 437
Shastras xviii, 22, 323,
Shastras, *shat* 438
Shatadarshanas 438
Shatadhanva 17
 Shatanand 391
Shat Shastras 438
 Shatrughna 400, 415, 419
Shauch (purity) 441
Shayanarchana 446
Shayi (recliner) 450
 She-dog 163
Shekharapidayojana 447
 Shell 17, 132, 376, 443
Shendur 139
 Shendurvadiya 384
 Sher tree 63, 287

- Shesha (Serpent)** 24, 95, 117, 126, 174, 206, 431, 450
Shesha, thousand-hooded 270
Shevanti tree 329
Shikhandi 408
Shiksha (a book of Rig Veda) 441
Shilaras 441
Shindi tree 328
Shira (the head) 440
Shirker 52
Shishupal 397, 412, 415
Shiva xxx, 7, 8, 20, 99, 181, 198, 390 403, 405, 431, 435, 442, 454
Shiva bow 418
Shiva Sutras xxx
Shivaji xviii, 198, 208-9
Shivapurāṇa 445
Shivaram Gosavi of Paithan 384
Shivāya, Om Namas 437-8
Shodashopachāra 444
Shoka 438
Shravan (hearing) 440
Shri Bhagawat 62
 „ *Bhaktivijaya* 6, 14
 „ *Krishna* 6
 „ *Pandhari* 14
 „ *Pandurang* 14
 „ *Ranga* 117, 246
Shri Ram Jaya Ram Jaya
 „ *Jaya Ram* 442
Shri, Samagra 437
Shridharswami of Nazre 384
Shrine of God 105
Shringār 441
Shripati 24, 175, 198, 374
Shripati (Saint) 384
Shrivatsalanchhan 408, 431
Shriyal 108
Shudras 90, 105, 177, 237, 282, 296, 435,
Shuka 374, 416
Shukasarikapralapana 447
Shukra (Semen) 438
Shukra (rishi) 416
Shur (king) 396, 419
Shursen 415
Shvaphalka 389
Shyama 78
Siddhanta (facts) 108
Siddhas 226
Siddhis, Ashta 443
Siddhis (accomplishment personified) 175, 236, 237
Siddhis (supernatural powers) 137
Siddheshwar 186
Simantonnayan 444
Single minded 118
Sinhagad 209
Sipping water (achaman) 444
Siradhvaja Janaka 418
Sita 168, 190, 196, 390, 406, 410, 418, 436
Six angas 443
Six attributes of God 437
Six enemies of the Soul 437
Six flavours or testes 437
Six fold fortune 451
Six kinds of Smarta Dharma xviii
Six letters, mystic formula of 438
Six noble characteristics 79

- Six Schools of Hindu philosophy, *Shat darshana* 438
 Six *Shastras* 106, 438, 443
 Six sweet juices 161
 Six systems of philosophy 145
 Six vices 437
 Six waves 438
 Sixteen materials or rites of worship 66, 52, 124, 173, 186
 Sixteen points of worship 444
 Sixteen purificatory rites 443
 Sixth principal *avatar* of Vishnu 405
 Sixtyfour arts or accomplishments 445
Skandh (part) 153
Skandu Puran 445
 Sky 215
 Sky of the heart 66
 Slayer of Demon Dhenuka 172
 Slayer of Kaliya 145
 „ „ demon Pralamba 235
 Slayer of Mani and Mall 198
 Slayer of Ravan 193
 Slaying of the Serpent Kāliya 424
 Sling 174, 260, 306
 Slumber 116
Smarana (meditating) 440
Snana (bathing) 444
 Sneer 115
 Socrates xxxiii
Soham 159
 Solar eclipse 423
 „ race 390
 Somanath 442
 Sonar 378
 Son of Anjani 257, 408
 „ „ Anusaya 162-3, 294
 „ „ Atri 162
 „ „ Brahma (Narad) 386
 Sons of Brahma 439
 Son of Dasbrath 193
 „ „ Devaki 154
 „ „ Kausalya 193
 „ „ Parvati 239
 „ „ Raghu 41
 „ „ Vasudev 15, 122
 „ „ Yeshoda 14
 Song service 404
 Songs spiritual xxv
 Sopan 377
 Sorcerer 334
 Sorcery 448
 Sorrow 438
 Soul xxx
 Soul-destructive error xxvi
 Soul-knowledge 395
 Soul of the universe 100
 Sour 437
 Sources xxvi
 South India xx
 Space 142, 445, 450
Sparsha 436
 Speculation, metaphysical xxvi
 „ philosophical xxvi
 Speech 436
 Spiked bed 201, 241, 266, 295, 387
 Spirit of God xxiv
 Spiritual ignorance 445
 „ knowledge 241, 443
 „ riches 227
 „ songs xxv
 „ power 413, 425

- Spittoon 156-7
 Sporter in *Vaikunth* 304
 Spring time 166
 Srishela 442
Sruti xxv
 Stage, highest 146
Stambha 439
 Stanzas 447
 Star 439, 456
 Starlings 447
 Stick 447
 Stone idol 68
 Stories, biographical xxiv
 Strategy 446
 Struggle for God xxvi
 Stupefaction 439
 Subal (King of Gandhār) 415
 Subhadra 391
 Subservient 15
Suchivankarma 446
 Sudama 418-9
Sudarshan wheel 386, 451
Sudarshana (Vishnu) 451, 454
Sudeshna 402
Sugandhyukti 446
 Sugar mill 241
 Sugriva 410
 Sumati Kamalakara 384
Sumitrā 399, 415, 412, 419
 Summoning 444
 Sun 193, 391, 396, 401, 431,
 439, 443-4
 Suniti 392, 403
Supari 436
 Suppliant 2, 104
 Supplicated 424
 Supplication 23
 Supreme *Brahma* 104, 132, 183
 428
 „ God 440
 „ Spirit 416, 418
 „ Soul 131
 „ thought 122
 Supremacy 440
Surā (wine) 443
Surdas (Blind) 14, 15, 380
Surdas Madanmohan 38, 41-2,
 380
Suresha, Sureshvara 454
 Surnchi 392
Suryanarayan (Sun) 111, 155
Suryanarayan (father of
 Eknath) 125
Suryavalokan 444
Sutrakrida 446
Suvarn 438
Surasini 303, 345
Svapna 434
Svarabhang 439
Svaraloka 439
Svarga 434
Svargarohan 444
Svastha (Vishnu) 454
Svayambhu 454
Svayamvar 390, 401, 409, 430
Sveda 439
Svedaja 434
Sreami 54, 100, 156
 Swan 156, 433
 Swasti 6, 99
Swati Nakshatra 326, 456
 Sweet 437
 Swimming 443
 Sword 447

Syamantak Jewel 389

Sympathy xxvii

Syncope 439

Syncretism xxix

T

Tabar 446

Tagore, Dr. Rabindranath xv,
xxxiii

Taharabad xxi, 387

Tailor 90

„ work 446

Taitasurabhitakarana 449

Takshena 447

Talamana 448

Talent 270, 296

Tamal leaf 264, 291

Tambve Moreshwarbawa 385

Tamra 438

Tanamatra, Panch 436

Tandava dance 240

Tandukusumabali prakar 446

Tanjore xx

Tansen 18

Tantra 448

Tapa 274, 439

Tapoloka 439

Tārā 436

Tārakāsura 399

Tārāmātī 399, 419-20

Tarati (tree) 81

Tarkakarma 447

Tarkika xviii

Taste for gain 113

Tattooing 446

Tatva (saint) 379

Tatvasār Puran 445

Tatve, Panch 436

Teachings 102

Taj (fire) 436

Temptation 263

Temporal xxxiii

Ten books of the Rigveda 441

Ten characteristics of Brah-
mans 441

„ faced demon (Ravan) 230

„ fragrant ingredients 441

„ headed monster 436

„ heads of Ravana 411

„ materials of incense 70

„ organs 445

„ principal avatars 441

Test 49

Thakurdwar Krishna's temple
62, 67

Theology xxv, xxvi, 443

Theologians xxiv

Third avatar of Vishnu 413

Thirteen ingredients, rolled
betul leaves with 442

Thirteen letters, a mystic
formula with 442

Thirty-three gods 445

Thompson, E. W. xxviii

Thousand arms 416

„ eyes 422

Thousand-hooded Shesha 270

„ mouths 126

„ physical holes, Indra's 422

Thread ceremony 444

Threefold boon 418

Three gods: Brahma, Shankar,
Vishnu 408

- Three hundred and thirty millions Gods** 125
Three kinds of actions 434
 „ **methods of the study of Vedas** 411
 „ **paces of Vaman** 406
 „ **qualities** 252
 „ **upright and Twelve other marks** 70
 „ **worlds** 103, 129, 159, 187 404
Tikshnaka (iron) 439
Tilottama 78, 125, 443
Tip of arrow 422
 „ „ **nail** 83
 „ „ **nose** 92
 „ „ **tongue** 272
Tirthas xvii
Tiruvadi xx
Toad 81
Todar 218
Toe 54
Tolerance xxvii
Tomb of Pundalik 254
Top-knots 447
Torch bearer 277
Tortoise 41, 441, 456
Touchstone 5, 125
Trayodashaguni Vida 442
Trayodashakshari mantra 442
Transgressions 31, 99
Treasure-house of devotion 67
Treatise on the art of love 443
Treta yuga 207, 374, 420, 435
Tribhuvan 434
Trickery 447
Triloksha 454
Trimbak, Trimbakeshwar 131, 443
Tripur demon 289, 304, 399
Tripurari 399
Tritap, Trividhtap 434
Trivikram 236
True meaning of Life xxvi
Truth, historical xxviii
Tukaram, Tuka, Tukoba xii, 200-1 294, 209, 249, 381,
Tulsi 2, 131
 „ **mahatmya** xi
Tulsidas 376
Tumbera 131
Tumbaru 399
Tup 436, 441
Turbans 447
Turiya, Turya 434
Tusk 230, 413
Tvashta or Vishva Karma 414
Twice-born (the Brahman) 86, 110, 127
Twelve Aditya (Suns) 445
 „ **jiyotirlingas** 442
 „ **marks of Gopichandan clay** 442
Twenty-four elements 445
Two mimansa 438
 „ **Nyaya** 438

U

Uda 441
Udaipur 66
Udakaghat 446
Udakavadya 446
Udana 436
Udanu (three) 113
Udbhija 434

- Udo* 131
Uddhava 243, 392, 394, 397
 „ *Chidghan* 348, 362, 382
Ugrasen 12, 392, 395
Ujjain, Ujjani 18, 331, 337,
 418, 438, 442
Uma 181
Unconquered one 450
Uncouth 222
Unfathomable 214, 328
Unguents 447
Uninvited guests 66
Universe xxv
Universal form 450
 „ *radiance* 109
 „ *space* 109
Unmanifested 25
Unnamable (out-caste) 94, 176
Unseemingly 229, 328
Untouchability xx
Upadhi 447
Upamanyu 393
Upanayana 444
Upanishads xiv xxv
Uplata 441
Uparichara 417
Uru 440
Urvashi 19, 393, 411, 443
Utsahan 447
Uttanapad 392, 403
- V**
- Vāchik* 434
Vadaval 151
Vadaya 29
Vaditra 448
Vādya 445
Vaidikus xviii
Vaidyakriya 449
Vaijanath 442
Vaijayanti 67, 83
Vaijayikavidyana 448
Vaikhari, Vani 435
Vaikunth 2, 19, 122, 174, 206,
 241, 322, 346
Vaikuntha (God Vishnu) 455
Vainyikavidyadnyana 448
Vairagis 42
Vairagya 2, 204, 222, 253
Vairagya, samagra 437
Vaishyas 90, 403, 405
Vaishakh (May) 284
Vaisheshika 438
Vaishnavas 12, 19, 20, 241
Vaishnavite element xxx
Vaisvarya 439
Vaitalikavidyadnyana 448
Vaivarnya 439
Vajrāsan (spiked-bed) 201, 241,
 266, 295
Vaki 218
Vakpatav 449
Vakrokti 448
Vaksha (chest) 440
Vale 70, 218
Vali 436
Vallabha 453
Valmiki 27, 206-7, 282, 396,
 413-4, 418
Valmik Puran 445
Valour 393
Value, moral xxv
 „ *religious* xxv
 „ *wordly* xxv
Vaman 252, 413, 406, 44:

- Vaman Puran** 445
Vamanswami 384
Vanamali 8, 214, 265, 454
Vanaprasthas xviii, 435
Vandan 440
Vanga 439
Vani, char 435
Vanijy: 449
Vanish 118, 297
Vara 453
Varada 454
Varaha (Boar) 413, 421, 441
Varaha Puran 445
Varanavat 429
Varavesha 449
Varna Dharma xviii
 ,, ,Char 435
Varnashram Dharma xviii
Varnikavridhi 449
Vashishtha 393, 399, 413, 419, 431-432
Vashitva 440
Vastra 444
Vastrabharan 449
Vastragopana 448
Vastu 447
Vastushuddhi 448
Vasus, eight 445
Vasudev (father of Krishna)
 15, 122, 392, 396, 403, 415
Vāsudeva (Vishnu) 109, 454
Vāsudevaya Om Namō Bhagavate
 442
Vatsala 454
Vāyu 436
Vāyu Puran 445
Vāyuprokata Puran 445
Veda (God) 455
Veda, char 435
Vedas 24, 282, 419, 443
Vedānta xxv, xxx, 108, 438
Vehicle of Vishnu (the Eagle)
 256, 394
Velocity 268
Vengeance 405
Venomous 424
Vepathu 439
Vichitravirya 403, 414-5, 417
Victory (jaya) 131
Vidā 261, 332, 442
Vidarbha 399, 407, 412
Vidnyana 448
Vidur 273, 365, 414-5, 429
Vidyanagar 121, 381
Vijapur 337
Vijaya (conquest) 131
Vijaya 454
Villains 118
Viman, Pushpak 411
Vina 19, 102, 404, 426
Vinadamarukavadnyani 446
Vinanad 449
Vinata 258, 268, 391, 398
Vinayak (Ganapati) 239
Vindhyadri 389
Vindication 96
Vira 441
Virakta 47
Virasen 404
Virata 390, 400, 402-3, 406
Virochana 406
Virtue 420
Virulent poison 73
Virupaksha 266

- Vishaya, Panch* 436
Vishesh 441
Visheshakachhed 446
Vishnu 8, 22, 38, 389, 390, 396, 419, 432-3, 435, 443, 455
Vishnu Puran 445
Vishnurahasya Puran 445
Vishrantvat 479
Vishvakarma or *Tvashta* 125, 414
Vishvamisra 18, 54, 409, 413-4 419, 431 3
Vishvamisra's new creation 431
Vishvatma 455
Visible 66
Visible form 68
 ,, *manifestation* 85
Vision 133, 196, 288
Visoba 378
Visoba Saraf 367, 369, 382
Vithabai 245, 293
Vithal 79, 270
Vithal Purandar 384
Vithoba 299, 301, 307, 450
Vithonaik 95
Vithya Mahar 311
Vitandavad 449
Vivaha 444
Vivekananda Swami xvi
Vivekasindhu 104, 383
Vow, Shaiva 393
Vrikshayurvedayoga 447
Vrindavan city 42, 346
Vrindavan (bitter fruit) 106, 223
Vrindavan (tulsi altar) 125
Vritra 422
Vyāghrapad 393
Vyākaran 442, 449
Vyāna 436
Vyas 27, 156, 206, 208, 282, 399, 403, 417, 438
W
Waistband 67
Waistcord 70
Wale 213, 257, 268
Warkaris 143, 244, 254, 306
Washerman 90, 418
Water 436, 445
 ,, *deities* 254
Wave offering 3
Weapon 392
Witte, Prof. x
Will, Dr. Abbott's last iv
Will-born 416
Wind 396, 407
Wine 443
Wish-cow 57, 96, 125, 432, 443
Wish-stone 125
Wish-tree 58, 122, 443
Wisp 266
Witch crafts 334
Witnesser, internal 173
Wonderful City 123
 ,, *deeds* 197
Wondrous beauty 417
Workers in coppers 90
 ,, ,, *stones* 90
World-Guru 155
Worship xxx
Worship of God 165
 ,, ,, *fire* 165
 ,, *Hari* xxvii

Wrath 231
Wreath 446

Y

Yadava 13, 389
Yadnajiti 409
Yadnyopavita 444
Yadnyapurusha 273
Yadnyavalki 383
Yadnyavalkya (rishi) 414
„ Smṛiti xviii
Yadu 416, 417
Yajamā 18
Yajur-veda 435
Yama, Yamadharma 318,
396, 402, 418
Yamaji 296
Yamanarad Puran 445
Yamuna 341
Yantramantrikadharaṇa 447

Yasha, Samagra 437
Yashoda 14, 17, 185, 392,
403, 409, 423
Yathasthan 449
Yavan 395
Yavan (purochan by name) 429
Yellow-robe 13, 119
Yoga 438
Yogabhrashita 16
Yogis 19, 90, 241
Yojangandhā 417
Yudhishtira 390, 402, 405
Yuga, Kālī 14, 15, 32, 128,
193, 205, 374
„ Treta 419
„ Dvāpāra 435
„ Kṛta 435
Yuga, char 435
Yuvaraja 397
Yuyutsu 403